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OUTLINES OF BRITISH SOCIAL  
HISTORY

•

By E. H. DANCE, M.A.

## BRITAIN IN WORLD HISTORY

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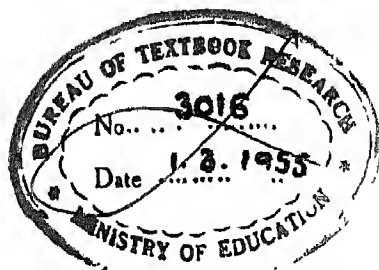
# OUTLINES OF BRITISH SOCIAL HISTORY

BY

E. H. DANCE, M.A.

WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

*NEW EDITION*



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## PREFACE

THESE Outlines are intended mainly for readers on the threshold of their teens, and I have tried to keep them within limits which such pupils can cover in a year. Even in so little space, however, interest has to be maintained and thought stimulated, and I have therefore been as liberal as possible of actual examples which illustrate the course of Social development, and the exercises have been devised, not so much to test the pupil's knowledge, as to afford some training in its use. Only a small proportion of them can be written out in a year, but the rest may serve as a basis of oral work, and they have therefore been made fairly comprehensive.

The thirty-two original extracts, upon which the Source Exercises are based, have been chosen not only for their suitability in class-work, but also for their intrinsic interest as illustrations of Social movements. I hope that in schools where a separate Source-Book is not available these extracts may be found to be an efficient substitute.

Since a year's work in Social History is usually merely a parenthesis in a continuous course of Political History, I have purposely emphasised, as far as space would permit, the connection between Social and Political movements. With the same purpose of discouraging in young pupils the tendency to separate

History into water-tight compartments, I have included in the two Time Charts a fair number of dates from European History.

All the illustrations have been taken from trustworthy sources, and I wish to thank those whose kindness has enabled me to reproduce them—especially the Staff of the Print Room at the British Museum, for their ungrudging guidance through the wealth of material in their charge, Mr Norman Ault, for permission to reprint some of his own drawings from his delightful little book, "Life in Ancient Britain"; and Mr G. M. Trevelyan, from whose "History of England" has been taken the excellent map of a Medieval Village on page 51. I am also greatly indebted to Mrs P. Styles, for information about medieval Birmingham, and to my wife, whose suggestions in matters of detail, and assistance in correcting the proof-sheets, have been invaluable

In the incendiary raid on London at the end of 1940 this book was one of the many major casualties, and the opportunity has been taken to revise it thoroughly. Several passages have been rewritten in the light of developments since the book was originally written, three maps have been added, and a number of smaller modifications have been made. The last chapter has been recast and continued to the immediate consequences of the war of 1939-45. In the remainder of the book care has been taken not to alter the paging, so that the new edition can be used with the old in classes whose pupils possess both

E. H. D.

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either translated or slightly adapted.*

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# OUTLINES OF BRITISH SOCIAL HISTORY

## CHAPTER I

### BEFORE HISTORY

*History* means the Story of Mankind. If we have a story we must have somebody to tell it. If no one can tell this story except by writing it down, *History* is the Story of Mankind, and we have either spoken or written about it.

**Prehistoric Times.**—Nobody knows how long we have been men on the earth. We do know that the first men, and those who came after them for a very long time could neither speak nor write. They were little better than animals. They got their food and eating it on the spot, chattered like monkeys, fighting, and even killing one another. These earliest men could leave us no *etc.*—no written account of themselves and of what they did. So the times when they lived are called *Prehistoric* times (or times *before History*), and since we cannot learn about them from writings, we have to do so in other ways.

The chief way in which we learn about prehistoric times is by digging for the remains of these prehistoric men. Some of them died perhaps 500,000 years ago, or more, and their remains are buried deep in the

earth. Some of them died only 5,000 years ago or less, and the remains of these men are near the surface. The remains of the last prehistoric men are so different from the remains of the first, that we can tell from them how much civilisation had progressed before we have their proper history—that is, the history which is iron-written down.

Iron-Wire

Map of the Old Stone Age.—The very first men of all are Early Stone Age, from a Greek word meaning “early.” The Suez Canal.

A Modern Prize

Cheapside (London)

Weoley Hill, Bourn

Cheapside (London) To

A C W S Four Mill, Man

Map Modern Town-Plan

Early Renaissance Archi

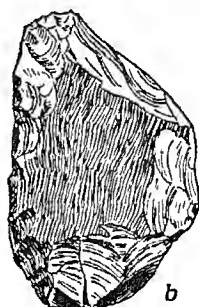
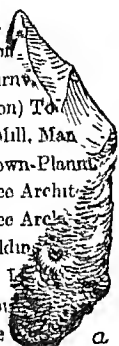
Later Renaissance Arch

Steel Frame Building

Australia House, L

Broadcasting Hou

Meteor Jet Plane

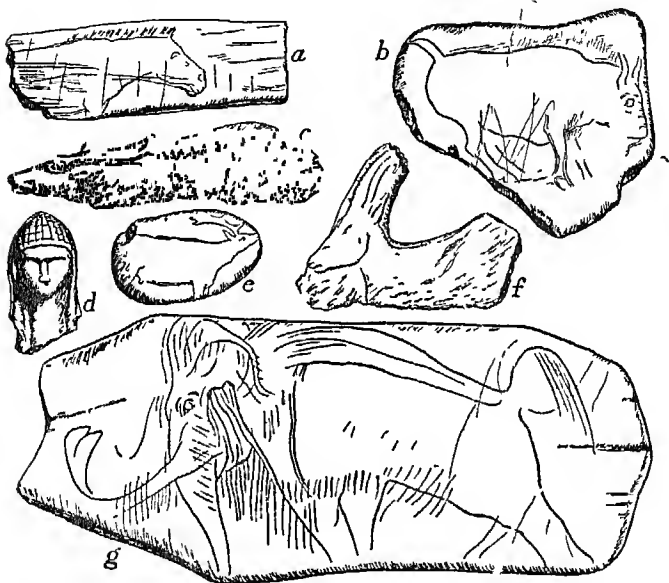


PALÆOLITHIC TOOLS

from Ault's "Life in Ancient Britain.")

We know hardly anything about these men, or Early Stone Age men, and we do not know very much more about the *Palæolithic* (or Old Stone Age) men who came after them. There is very little left of them, except a few skeletons and some of the weapons they used. These weapons were all of stone, chipped in a very rough way by knocking them against other stones until they were pointed or edged sharply enough to be used as clubs or daggers or knives. We can only guess how the first Old Stone Age men lived. They used then stone weapons for

hunting, and so they were different from all the other animals, which do not use manufactured weapons at all. Probably they lived in caves, or even in trees, and they must have been far more savage than the most savage races of to-day.



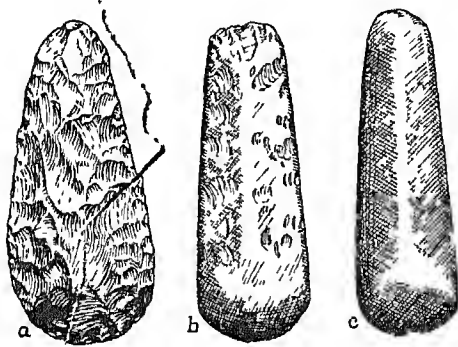
PALEOLITHIC DRAWINGS ENGRAVED ON BONE, ETC.

(From Ault's "Life in Ancient Britain")

The Old Stone Age lasted hundreds of thousands of years, and during all that time Palæolithic man was becoming less like the animals and more like ourselves. His weapons remained rough, but he began to try to make his surroundings more beautiful. He began wearing clothes, which he made from the skins of animals, sewing them together with bone needles.

threaded with sinews." He even began to build huts and to scratch pictures on the sides of the caves in which he lived. Some of these pictures can still be seen, and they show that many of the Palæolithic men were quite skilful artists in their rough way.

**The New Stone Age.**—From this time men began to progress rapidly in civilisation. They made their stone weapons and tools much more skilfully, polishing them



NEOLITHIC TOOLS

(From Aul's "Life in Ancient Britain.")

up to make them look better. They built their huts together in villages, instead of living alone with no companions but their wives and children. They trained dogs to help them in hunting, and horses to carry them about, and learned how to keep sheep and cows and goats for milk. They made rough ploughs for tilling the ground—and this shows that they now ate other foods besides the meat which they caught in hunting. They dug mines from which to obtain flint for their tools, and even began a sort of trade by exchanging tools with men of other villages. Their clothes were now really made of "cloth," which

they wove for themselves. In fact, they were vastly different from the men of the Old Stone Age—except that they still had only stone and bone tools. This more civilised period is called the *Neolithic* (“New Stone”) Age.

**The Bronze Age.**—Then came a greater change still—the discovery of metal, which made weapons so much better than the old ones of stone that before very long the Stone Age passed away completely. At first the commonest metal was bronze, and the time of bronze weapons is known as the *Bronze Age*, which lasted, as nearly as we can guess, from about 4,000 years till about 500 years before the birth of Christ.

In these 3,500 years there was time for great changes, so that the last men of the Bronze Age were much more civilised than the first. But besides this, men were much more civilised in one country than in another, just as they are now. The inhabitants of this country were still quite savage at a time (about 2,000 years before Christ) when the people of Crete were very civilised indeed. In the ruins of cities of the Bronze Age (especially *Cnossus* in Crete, and *Mycenæ* and *Tiryns* in Greece) explorers have discovered huge palaces with over a hundred rooms, besides well-built streets and houses, which show that in the Bronze Age the people around the Mediterranean Sea were more civilised even than some parts of Europe to-day.

**Trade in the Bronze Age.**—In this country, however, the people were far less advanced. Most of them still lived in caves, or in villages of stone huts, and were not much different from the men of the Stone Age, except that their tools were made of metal. But the tribes in the south-west had one great advantage over

the others. Bronze cannot be made without tin, and some of the best tin mines in Europe were in the south-west of this country. Consequently, traders came from all parts to obtain this tin in exchange for goods from their own lands. And through constantly meeting foreign traders (some of whom were *Cretans* and *Greeks*, and *Phœnicians* from the famous ports of



STONEHENGE (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH)  
(From Gardiner's "*A Student's History of England*")

*Tyre* and *Sidon* in Palestine), the men of this country became less rough and more like their civilised customers.

The greatest Bronze Age building left in England is *Stonehenge*, on Salisbury Plain, and nobody knows whether it was a temple or a cemetery. But it is built so skilfully, of such mighty stones (some of which are raised 20 feet from the ground), that we cannot help admiring the Bronze Age men who erected it.

**Goidels and Brythons.**—Not long before the end of the Bronze Age this country was invaded by a tribe called the *Goidels*. For several hundred years the Goidels lived here undisturbed, looking after their flocks. Then, about 400 years before Christ, a new tribe, called the *Brythons*, came and drove the Goidels into the mountainous districts of the north. There the Goidels settled, and their flocks obtained plenty of suitable food from the mountain pastures. The Brythons stayed in the south, where the land was less rocky and more fertile—for the Brythons were fonder of cultivating the ground than of rearing sheep, like the Goidels. These Brythons were the people who are more commonly known as the *Britons*, and the Goidels (or *Gaels*) were the ancestors of the Scottish Highlanders, many of whom still speak the *Gaelic* language.

**The Iron Age and the Britons.**—By the time of the Brython invasion, iron had been discovered. Bronze tools and weapons gradually went out of fashion, and the *Iron Age* began. From the remains of the men of this age we can learn how the ancient Britons lived. Their villages were built in all kinds of queer places for safety—on hillsides, where they were often surrounded by a ditch and a mound for keeping out enemies, around caves, which could be kept fairly warm in winter, and even (as at *Glastonbury* in Somerset) in the middle of shallow lakes, sometimes with a hidden pathway under the water, which an enemy could hardly find.

The Britons lived in huts which were made of a kind of basketwork, fastened to upright poles, and covered with mud and straw. They were nearly all farmers, tilling the ground and keeping horses, cows, sheep, goats, and pigs. They made their own clothes of cloth which they wove on their own looms. The usual dress for men was a coat and trousers, fastened around the leg with a sort of puttee or long garter.

The women wore skirts, and both men and women were fond of bright colours, especially red, and patterns like a modern Scottish plaid. There was a good deal of trade with foreign countries. The people of the south-west still sold their tin, and much corn was carried across the sea to Europe. Moreover, trade was no longer just *barter*—that is exchanging one thing for another. Money (at first in the shape of bars of iron) was beginning to be used, and so commerce was carried on much more easily.

**The End of Prehistoric Times.**—By now, prehistoric times were over. Even as early as 300 years before Christ, a merchant from Marseilles, called *Pytheas*, wrote an account of the Britons and his dealings with them. Other travellers did the same. Fifty-five years before Christ, and again in the next year, *Julius Caesar*, the great Roman general, invaded Britain, and punished the Britons for helping the *Gauls* against him, and in his account of the wars in which he fought, he has described what he knew about the Britons. Thus the real, written history of this country had begun. From that time onwards we have plenty of written accounts of the life of the people, instead of having to depend entirely on remains dug out of the earth.

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER I

##### 1 Questions :—

- (a) Why are the earliest times called *Prehistoric*?
- (b) Into what different ages are prehistoric times usually divided?
- (c) Describe how we have discovered what we know about prehistoric times.
- (d) Write an account of a day in your life, as though you were living (i) in the Old Stone Age, (ii) in the New Stone Age.
- (e) What were the chief differences between the men of the Old Stone Age and the men of the New Stone Age?
- (f) Write an account of a day in your life as though you



were a Bronze Age man living (i) in a great Mediterranean city, (ii) in this country

- (g) Which parts of this country gained most by the coming of the Bronze Age, and why?
- (h) What do you know about trade in prehistoric times?
- (i) Write an account of a day in your life as though you were an ancient Briton
- (j) What do you know about the following?—Prehistoric, palæolithic, neolithic, Cnossus, Mycenæ, Tiryns, Phœnicians, Tyre, Sidon, Stonehenge; Goidels, Brythons, Gaelio, Glastonbury, barter, Pytheas, Julius Cæsar, Gauls.

2 Source Exercise :—

"The inland parts of Britain are inhabited by those people who are supposed to have originated in the island, but near the sea there are those who came from *Belgium* to plunder. Most of these still have the same names as they had in their old countries. They came simply to fight, but they stayed, and began to cultivate the fields.

"There is a vast number of people and buildings, which are very like those in *Gaul*, and there are large herds of cattle. For money they use lumps or coins of *bronze*, or *iron bars* of a guaranteed weight. *Tin* is found in the interior, and iron near the sea, but there is not much iron. The bronze they use is imported.

"The *Britons* who live in Kent are much more civilised than the rest, because Kent is by the sea, and so its customs are much like those of Gaul. In most of the inland districts they do not grow corn, but live on milk and meat, and they dress in furs." (From Cæsar's *Gallie War*)

- (a) What does Cæsar tell us, in these passages, about (i) the early history of the Britons, (ii) life among the Britons, (iii) different kinds of Britons?
- (b) Are there any ways in which Cæsar's account seems likely to be wrong? If so, can you give a reason for Cæsar's mistake?
- (c) Write notes on the words in italics.

3. Draw pictures or make models of —

- (a) Prehistoric tools and weapons
- (b) Prehistoric huts and villages of various types
- (c) Stonehenge.

4. Cut out cardboard models of prehistoric people, and draw, colour, and cut out paper copies of prehistoric clothing for them.

## CHAPTER II

### ROMAN BRITAIN

JULIUS CÆSAR was the greatest general of the *Roman Empire*, and it was because the Britons were hindering him from spreading that Empire over all *Gaul* (as France was then called) that he invaded Britain. When he had conquered Gaul, the Roman Empire was the greatest there had ever been, spreading from Palestine right across Asia Minor and Europe to the shores of the Atlantic. Such a great Empire, so near to Britain, was bound to influence the Britons, who traded with the Romans and copied their ways.

**The Roman Conquest of Britain**—About a hundred years after Cæsar's invasion (in the year 43 A D), the Roman Emperor *Claudius* decided to conquer Britain and make the Britons pay him taxes, or *tribute*, as the Gauls, Spaniards, Jews, and all the other subjects of the Roman Empire did already. It took twenty or thirty years to do this, and then a Roman *governor* was placed over Britain—just as *Pontius Pilate* had been governor of Palestine some years before. The greatest of the Roman governors of Britain was *Agricola*, and we know all about him, because a famous Roman historian, *Tacitus*, married his daughter, and wrote the story of his life.

Agricola was governor during the years 78 to 85 A D. He spread garrisons of Roman troops all over the country, to keep it in order, and gradually the head-

quarters of each garrison became a town. These towns were connected by well-built military roads, along which the soldiers could move quickly to wherever they were wanted. All the roads were built in a scientific manner, like modern roads, and many of them have remained in use till now. Two of the most important roads crossed each other at London, one of these ran from Colchester to Exeter, and the other (called *Watling Street*) from Dover to Chester, and as another road (*Ermine Street*) ran from this junction to Lincoln, London became an important Roman town. Besides these there were the *Fosse Way*, from Exeter to Lincoln, and the *Icknield Way*, which branched from the Fosse Way at Bath and ran north-east to Caister in Norfolk. There was also a network of smaller roads which, before long, covered the whole of Britain.

Agricola decided that he could not conquer the whole of this island (which the Romans called *Britannia*). He therefore built a line of forts across the narrowest part of the island, from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Forth, to keep back the uncivilised tribes of the north. Later governors found that they could not keep in order even so much as this, and in the year 122 A.D. a new line of forts, connected by a high stone wall, was built from the Solway Firth to the mouth of the Tyne, and it was called *Hadrian's Wall*, after the Roman Emperor at that time.

**The Roman Peace.**—All these military arrangements kept the Britons quiet and undisturbed by their enemies. Indeed, the Romans made it their boast that everywhere in their Empire they spread the *Roman Peace*, which enabled all the subjects of the Roman Empire to live quietly in a properly civilised fashion.

The Roman Peace caused trade to flourish, and

great towns were built where trade could be carried on. Many of these towns began as military castles, and often their names end in *-chester*, or *-cester*, or *-xeter*, from the Latin word *castrum* meaning a *castle*. But before the Romans had governed Britain for long, most towns were peaceful trading centres, with a



RUINS OF THE GREAT ROMAN BATH, AT BATH  
(By permission of the *Municipal Publicity Department, Bath*)

*forum* (market-place) and shops, a town hall, public baths, and well-built houses.

Nothing shows the civilisation of the Romans better than their houses and their baths. Some of the houses had many rooms with fine stone floors laid out in patterns. There was no need for carpets, because the floors and walls were kept warm by central heating.

A furnace at the back of the house drove hot air along flues which ran up the walls and under the floors, and kept the whole house at a fairly even temperature. The baths, which had hot and cold water and heated dressing-rooms, were warmed in the same way. Besides the public baths (where the charge for admission was about a farthing) there were plunge baths in many private houses. One house, of which there are still remains, had three such baths and fifty other rooms.

Most of these big houses, however, were in the country, and were called *villas*. They were surrounded by farms, for the Romans made vast improvements in agriculture in this country. Corn was grown so successfully that there was plenty to sell to other parts of the Empire, and Britain became known as the *Granary of the North*. Besides this, the Romans introduced into this country farm animals and fruit not known here before—including fowls, geese, hornless sheep, pears, and cherries. At first, these *villas* were owned by the Romans who came from Italy, and who farmed their land with the labour of British slaves. Later on, many British chiefs established *villas*, which were thus owned by British gentlemen farmers.

For the first two or three centuries, the Britons worshipped the heathen gods of the Romans. In the fourth century, however, Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, and, of course, Britain changed its religion with the rest. Thus, under the Roman rule, Britain, like most of Western Europe, was a peaceful, prosperous, Christian, civilised country.

**End of the Roman Empire**—Then all this was changed. Savage tribes began to invade the Roman Empire from the East, and it was threatened with destruction. While the *Goths* were attacking Italy,

at the heart of the Empire, the *Saxons* from Germany were attacking the east coast of Britain. So violent were these attacks that a special governor was appointed, called the *Count of the Saxon Shore*, with the special duty of protecting the east coast. But the Goths were so troublesome in Italy that fewer and fewer Roman soldiers could be sent to this country, and before long even the few Roman troops which were here had to rush to the defence of Rome. Rome itself was burned down in the year 410 by the Goths, under the leadership of *Alaric*, and after that the Romans never returned to Britain. The Britons were left alone to face the attacks of the Saxons, who were soon joined by other tribes.

**Beginning of the Middle Ages.**—By the end of the fifth century A.D. the Empire of Rome was no more. Worse still, the Roman Peace was no more, and the Roman civilisation was gradually forgotten. From about the year 500 A.D. Europe, including this country, became less and less civilised. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there was a great improvement, but Europe had to wait until the fifteenth century for the famous revival of civilisation which is called the *Renaissance* (see Chapter XIV.) For this reason the times between the decay of the ancient civilisation of the Romans and the rise of the modern civilisation of our own day (from about the year 500 till about the year 1500) are usually known as the *Middle Ages*. These Middle Ages have a character of their own, which makes them very different from both ancient and modern times.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER II

- 1 Make a time chart to illustrate the history of Britain under the Romans.

2. Questions :—

- (a) What did Agricola do while he was governor of Britain ?  
Why do we know so much about him ?
- (b) Make a list of the chief Roman roads, putting after each the names of the towns through which it passed. Why were these roads built, and why have many of them lasted so long ?
- (c) For what reasons did London become important during the Roman period ?
- (d) What were the military arrangements by which the Romans defended Britain ?
- (e) How can we tell, by their names, many towns which were once Roman ? Make a list of such towns, explaining, in as many cases as possible, what the names mean.
- (f) Write an account of a day in your life as though you were a Briton living (i) in a Roman town, (ii) in a Roman *villa*.
- (g) In what different ways did Britain benefit under Roman government ?
- (h) What differences did the Romans make to farming in Britain ?
- (i) What caused the break up of the Roman Empire, and how did it affect Britain ?
- (j) What do you understand by the name *Middle Ages* ?
- (k) What do you know about the following ?—Claudius ; tribute, Pilate, Tacitus, Watling Street, Ermine Street, Fosse Way, Icknield Way ; Hadrian, the Roman Peace, forum, villa, the granary of the North ; Goths, Alaric, Saxons, Count of the Saxon Shore.

3 Source Exercise :—

“*Julius Caesar*, the first Roman who landed in Britain, was the discoverer, not the conqueror, of the island. He only showed it to those who came after him.”

“Under *Aulus Plautius* and *Ostorius Scapula*, the Southern part of Britain was made into a province of the Empire, and received a garrison.”

“In the first year in which *Agricola* was governor, improvements were made, and peace began to be enjoyed by the

inhabitants . Agricola encouraged the natives to build temples, law courts, and roomy dwelling-houses . He tried to give some education to the chiefs' sons so that the Britons, who had always despised the Roman language, now began to use it . Roman dress, especially the *toga*, came into fashion . *Baths*, magnificent porches, and feasts became popular . These new customs made the Britons contented with the Roman rule "

- (a) Where do you suppose this passage is taken from ?
- (b) How far do you agree with what the writer says about Julius Cæsar ?
- (c) What can we learn about Roman Britain from the sort of buildings which Agricola had built ?
- (d) Do you think this account is likely to be too favourable to Agricola—and if so, why ?
- (e) Find out all you can about, and write notes on, the names and other words in italics

#### 4 Draw maps of .—

- (a) The Roman Empire
- (b) Roman Britain, showing the chief towns, roads, walls, etc.

#### 5 Draw pictures or make models of —

- (a) Any Roman remains or relics you have seen,
- (b) Roman houses, baths, walls, etc
- (c) Roman soldiers
- (d) Britons in Roman dress



## CHAPTER III

### THE FIRST ENGLISHMEN

**The Coming of the English.**—The first *Englishmen* did not live in England, and they were not called “Englishmen” They came to this country from lands across the sea, in the north of what we now call Germany Once they had reached Britain they kept on sailing up the rivers (their boats were shallow enough for that), and when they found a suitable spot they built a village and settled there

Most of these English invaders were the Saxons, of whom we read in the last chapter others were the *Angles*, who were very like the Saxons, and together they are often called the *Anglo-Saxons*. They came in small bands, a few hundreds at a time, just enough warriors to fight their way inland and beat back the people of any British village they found. All the people in each band would be friends and relations, and their leader would be the chief man of the chief family among them So that, naturally enough, when they built a new village they often named it after their leader and his family

Owing to this custom of theirs, we can often tell a Saxon town from its name, just as we can tell a Roman town There are many English towns which contain the letters *-ing* in their names *Ing* means “family,” and so *Birmingham* means “the home of the family of Berm”, *Nottingham* (it used to be *Snotengahame*) means “the home of the family of Snote,” and so on.

If a town's name ends in *ham*, it was probably at one time a Saxon settlement. *Ham* is really the same as the Scottish word *hame*, meaning "home", and we see it in names such as *Oldham* and *Grantham*. Other Saxon endings are *-ton* (which is the old form of *town*) and *-burgh* or *-borough*. Thus *Edinburgh*, for example, simply means "Edwin's borough," and it is so called because it was founded by Edwin, the great Saxon king of Northumbria. *Kingston*, near London, means "King's town", and *Norton*, *Hampton*, *Stockton*, and such names, among many others, show where our Saxon ancestors once settled. Besides this, some of our English counties are named after the Saxons who settled in them. *Sussex* is the old home of the South Saxons, and *Essex* of the East Saxons. Between them is *Middlesex*, and the old name for the lands around the River Thames is *Wessex*.

**Life of the Saxons.**—Since these bands of Saxon invaders were all relations or friends, they tried to live in their new homes very much as they had lived in their old homes in Germany. Usually it would take a long time to make the village as they liked it to be, and to get rid of the old arrangements, if Britons had lived there before them. Scores of years would pass before everything was satisfactory, and as fresh bands of Saxons kept coming from Germany, all through the fifth and sixth centuries A. D., and making fresh settlements, the villages were not all alike. But sooner or later most of them came to be like one another in many ways.

There was one big difference between Saxon villages and the villages of the Britons. The Britons had usually built their houses a long way apart, with plenty of land between, and this sort of village is called a *hamlet*. But the Saxons preferred to build all their houses close together, so that they could be

easily defended if an enemy came. Often they surrounded all the houses with a ditch and a mound, for the same purpose, and it was the land and houses inside this mound which were called the *tun*, or *burgh*.

**The Folk-mote.**—Near the houses was the village green, where the folk used to meet to discuss and arrange the village affairs, and these gatherings were called the *folk-mote*, or “folk meeting.” It was in the folk-mote that the people tried and punished those who had broken the law or the custom of the village. These wrong-doers were not sent to prison as nowadays. Instead, any man who wronged another had to make amends by paying him for the damage he had done, and it was the wronged man’s relations who forced the other to make the proper payment. There was a regular scale of charges laid down by the laws. If a man was murdered, his relatives had to be paid *wergild* (or “man-gold”), and if the murderer refused to pay, the relatives would murder him in revenge. The *wergild* for killing an ordinary man was 200 shillings, or 33 oxen, for killing a *thegn*, or nobleman, it was as much as 1,200 shillings.

In the folk-mote, too, the villagers would have to discuss how to cultivate the fields. The land round a Saxon village was not divided into many fields, like a modern village. Instead of a large number of fields, there were never more than three, and often only two. These two or three fields, of course, were very big indeed, and they were divided up among the families of the village. Each family had land according to its importance. The family of a *ceorl* or *churl* (which was the ordinary name for a Saxon freeman) was allowed one *hide* (120 acres), a *thegn*’s family was allowed five times as much as that, and the greater Saxon nobles (*eorls*, or *earls*) had 40 hides or more.

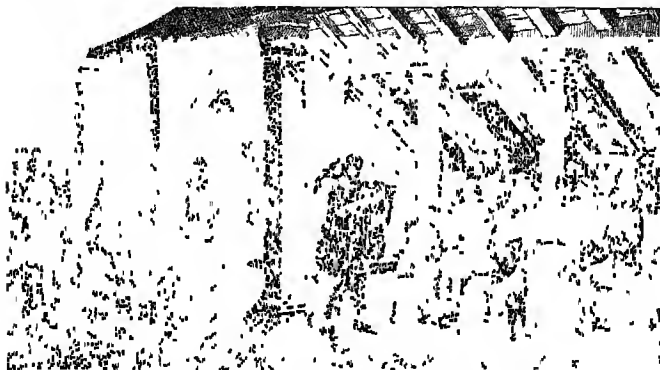
**The Open Fields.**—The land was divided out in a peculiar way. Instead of having its land all together, each family had separate acres of land, scattered about the *open fields*. This was to prevent the quarrelling which would have taken place if all the good land near the river had been given to one family and all the stony land on the hillside to another. But it meant that all the villagers had to join together and cultivate all the land in one way, instead of leaving each man to do as he liked with his own land. So the villagers shared between themselves one or two ploughs, and all the villagers lent their oxen in turn, to pull ploughs and wagons, and so on. As a rule, eight oxen were used to each plough (they were rough ploughs in those days, made by the village blacksmith, and they needed a lot of pulling). And as the cows would only have one or two oxen apiece, their turn for lending them to the village came fairly often.

Besides discussing when to plough and sow and reap, the folk-mote had to decide what to grow in each of the fields. One of the fields had to be left *fallow* each year, or the goodness would soon have been taken from the soil. On the rest of the land wheat or oats and barley would be sown, and more barley than wheat, because the bread of the Saxons was made of barley and rye, and barley makes beer, which was the Saxon's favourite drink.

**Saxon Homes**—All the houses, of course, were made of wood. Often they were only rough huts with no fireplace or chimney—nothing but a stone slab on the floor for the fire, and a hole in the roof to let out the smoke. For furniture they had nothing better than rough forms, benches, and stools, and for beds, only litters of straw or rushes. The Saxons lived very rough lives. When they came to this country they were no better than pirates, and even when

they had settled here, they were still almost half savage

Still, the ordinary ceorl, with his hide or more of land, was fairly well off for those times. Even the *theows*, or slaves, were not at all wretched. They had to work for the master to whom they belonged. Their cottages often had no private allotment, as the ceorl's cottages had. And they had few acre strips, or none, in the open fields. Still, they could not be turned



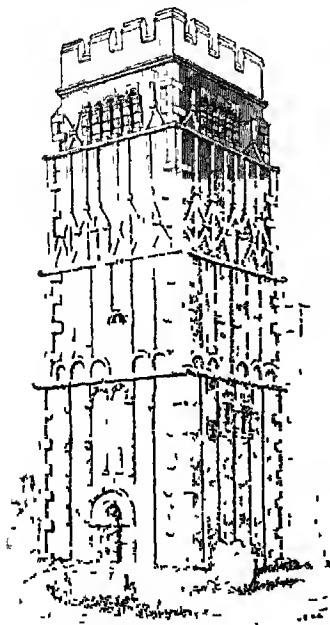
FEASTING IN A SAXON HALL

(Reduced from Longmans' "Historical Illustrations")

away from their houses or land, their masters looked after them fairly well, if only so that they should work better, and they were allowed two free loaves every day.

Most of the villagers never left their own village. Each settlement had to make for itself everything its people needed. The villagers had to grow their own corn, bake their own bread, and build their own houses. Even the spades and knives, as well as the ploughs, were made by the village blacksmith.

**The Shire-mote and the Fyrd.**—Consequently, few Anglo-Saxons used to realise that they had any rulers except the village thegn. Occasionally a few of them had to attend the *shire-mote*, which settled the business



SAXON ARCHITECTURE, EARL'S  
BARTON

(From Gardiner's "*A Student's  
History of England*")

of the shire, as the folk-mote settled the business of the village. In times of war, too, the freemen had to fight in the *fyrd* (as the army of the Saxon kings was called), but not for more than forty days each summer. In fact, the first Saxon kings had not much control over their subjects. Even when Alfred the Great became king there was much disorder, and we must remember that even Alfred was never king of all England, but only of Wessex, as the south of England was called.

**The Saxons become Christians.**—During the seventh century one very important change

took place in the lives of the Saxons. This was their conversion to Christianity by Saint Augustine and other famous preachers. When they came from Germany, the Saxons were heathens, worshipping many gods, among these were Woden, Thor, Tiu, and Frea, all of whom

have given their names to days in our week. The Saxons believed that these gods were cruel and savage, and the Saxons themselves liked to be as cruel and savage as their gods. But when they became Christians, they also became more civilised. At first the new religion made little difference to anybody but the kings and nobles, who were the first to be converted. Gradually, however, the peasants became more civilised too, and that enabled the kings to govern them better. That was one reason (though there were many others besides) why, soon after the time of Alfred, there was one King of all England, instead of several smaller Saxon kingdoms, such as *Northumbria*, *Mercia*, and *Wessex*.

**The Witan.**—When that happened the kings liked from time to time to have the advice of the wise men of the kingdom to help them in ruling it. So they used to call a meeting, or *mote*, of these wise men. The Anglo-Saxon word for *wise men* is *witena*, and so this assembly of the greatest men in England was called the *Witenagemot*, or *Witan*, for short. Just as the folk-mote helped to govern each village, and just as the shire-mote helped to govern each shire, so the Witenagemot helped to govern the whole kingdom, and thus in some ways it was like our modern Parliament.

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER III

- 1 Make a time chart showing the chief events in the history of the English between 400 and 800 A.D.
- 2 Questions :—
  - (a) Why did the English invade this country, and where did they come from?
  - (b) Describe the coming of a band of Englishmen as though you were one of them.

- (c) Make a list of former Saxon settlements near your home. Explain the meaning of as many of their names as you can.
- (d) What do the following Saxon names mean?—Weston, Norton, Sutton, Southampton<sup>1</sup>, Northampton, Newton, Chorlton, Charlton, Oldham, Northam; Rotherham, Edinburgh, Peterborough, Bury, Shrewsbury, Sandringham, Darlington, Paddington, Acerington, Clifton; Scarborough, Essex, Wessex, Sussex, Middlesex.
- (e) What were the differences between the villages of the Saxons and those of the Britons?
- (f) Describe a Saxon village—the houses, fields, etc
- (g) Write an account of a day in your life as though you were living in a Saxon village
- (h) How did the English divide the land they won? Why was this?
- (i) Find out the area of your school playing-field. How many fields of the same size would go to make up the land owned by—a *ceorl*, a *thegn*, an *eorl*?
- (j) What was the religion of the Anglo-Saxons when they came to this country? When and how did it change?
- (k) What are the meanings of the names of the seven days of the week? How did they get these names?
- (l) What do you know about the following?—Hamlet, tun, burgh, folk-mote, shire mote, witenagemot, wergild, eorl, ceorl, thegn, theow, open fields, fallow, tȳrd

### 3 Source Exercises.—

(1) "Formerly, in the laws of the English, people and law went by ranks, each according to his condition, *eorl* and *ceorl* and *thegn*. And if a *ceorl* throve, so that he had fully five *hides* of his own land, then was he thenceforth worthy of *thegn-right*. And if a *thegn* throve, so that he served the king, and on his summons rode among his household, and became an *eorl*, then was he thenceforth worthy of *eorl-right*" (Stubbs, *Select Charters*. By permission of the Oxford University Press.)

(a) What can you learn from this passage about the classes into which the Saxon people was divided?

(b) Write notes on the words in italics

(2) "This is the ordinance that King Edgar, with the counsel of his *witan*, ordained for the good of all his people . .

<sup>1</sup> *Hamp* usually means "high," *te*, on a hill





## CHAPTER IV

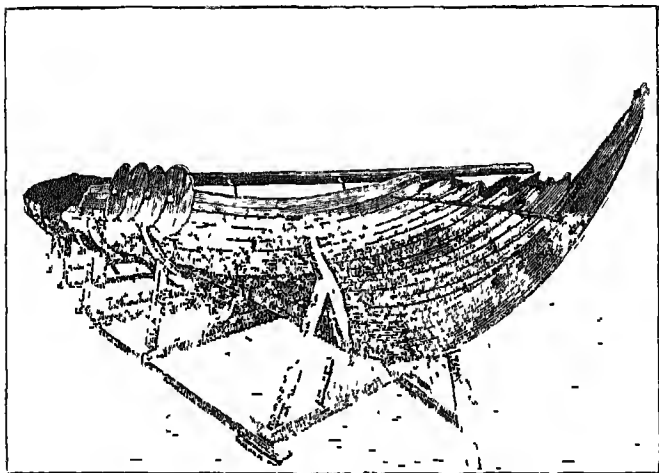
### THE DANES AND THEIR INFLUENCE

IN the last chapter we learned that England was slowly becoming a single kingdom, with one king, instead of several. One reason for this was that the English were becoming more civilised, and were more ready than before to obey a single king. But a more important reason was that the English were being attacked by fierce foes from over the sea, and they needed a king who could lead them against these foes, with a well-drilled army.

**The Danish Invasions.**—These new invaders were the Danes, who, about 800 A.D., began to come from countries in the north of Europe, round the mouth of the Baltic Sea. Most of you will have read in other books how they invaded England along the rivers of the east coast, as the Saxons had done before them, how they fought for the land with King Alfred the Great, and how at length Alfred and the Danes divided England between them, Alfred ruling Wessex, while the Danes lived in the east of the country, and called it the *Danelaw*, because in it they kept their own laws and customs.

There is no room in this book to tell over again the story of the Saxons' fighting against the Danes. Instead, we must consider how the Danish invasions altered the ordinary lives of the people.

**Fighting the Danes.**—In the first place, the Saxons had to have a navy and an army of their own. The Danes were splendid sailors, and the Saxons had to fight them by sea as well as by land, and because he built the first really strong fleet of English ships, Alfred the Great is often called the "father of the English navy."



REMAINS OF A DANISH SHIP

(From Gardiner's "*A Student's History of England*")

But in a way he was also the father of the English army, and the army made more difference than the navy to the lives of most of the Saxons. We have seen already that in Saxon times, every freeman was bound to serve in the *fyrd* when he was needed, although no man could be forced to stay away from home for more than forty days each year.

When the Saxon invasions of England had ended, and before the Danish invasions began, there was so

much peace that the fyrd had little fighting to do, and the freemen were left at home to till their lands. King Alfred, however, had to make the fyrd strong again, so that he could resist the Danes. And in order to prevent the fields from being untended for six weeks every summer, he made a new arrangement that while half the freemen were doing their forty days' service, the other half should look after the crops. Then at the end of the forty days the two halves changed places for another six weeks. In this way there was plenty of corn for food, as well as a good army for fighting the Danes.

**The Growth of Towns**—Another change caused by these Danish invasions was that towns began to spring up all over the country—especially in the east. Nearly all the Saxons lived in villages, and the people of one village had very little to do with the people anywhere else. But these Saxon villages were very easy for the Danes to attack, with their open fields and their wooden houses all huddled together round the village green. And so many of the Saxons began to build towns in places which were difficult to attack.

The safest place for building these towns was near the top of a hill, and so we find that many of the towns founded at this time are on hillsides. To make the town stronger still, a fence was usually built around it. Often the fence was made of spiked wooden palings, which were difficult enough for an enemy to climb over while he was being shot at. And it was more difficult still when, as often, a deep ditch was dug just outside the fence. Sometimes there was a stone wall instead of a fence, but this was unusual in Saxon times.

These towns were really fortresses—safe places to which an army could retreat when it was beaten, and where women and children could shelter while the soldiers were fighting outside. But it is not only

women and children who seek safe shelter in war time. Merchants, too, like to have somewhere where they can sell their goods without much danger. And therefore many of these fortified places became market towns, where goods were bought and sold freely even in war time.

**Market Towns.**—One of the Saxon words for market is *port*. Nowadays, we only speak of seaside places as “ports.” But at that time, any place to which goods were brought for sale was called a port. That is why so many towns whose names end in “port” are far from the sea—such as *Stockport*. But we must also remember that in those days, when ships were small enough to sail up rivers, towns a long way inland might easily be ports in our sense. Even York, for example, was one of the greatest shipping ports in the Middle Ages, because ships could sail so far up the River Ouse.

The Danes came from the north of Europe, and so very much of their trading was done with northern lands, such as Norway, and even Iceland. Bristol was one of the chief ports for this trade with the north, and the merchants of Bristol were famous for trading in slaves, which were shipped from that port to northern countries. In an old book we can read that

“the people of Bristol had a hateful custom of buying men and women in all parts of England, and exporting them to Ireland for gain. Nor were these men ashamed to sell into slavery their nearest relatives—nay, even their own children.”

**Danish Towns**—Besides the “ports” or market towns, many towns were built simply because they could be made into strong fortresses. The Danes themselves, once they had settled in England, were as anxious as the Saxons to build towns for defence.

They had five famous fortresses in the Danelaw, as well as many less famous ones. These were the "five boroughs" of *Nottingham, Derby, Lincoln, Leicester, and Stamford*.

Of these five towns, four have names which show that they were founded in Saxon times or earlier—before the Danes came. *Derby*, however, is a true Danish name, and so are other town names ending in *-by*, which simply means "town." It is as easy to tell Danish towns, as Saxon or Roman towns, by their names. *-Thorpe* and *-wick*, meaning "village," and *-toft*, meaning "farm," are other common Danish endings. Towns with names ending in these ways are mostly in the east of England, especially that part which used to be the Danelaw.

**Results of the Danish Invasions**—The lives of the Saxons were changed in yet another way by the Danish invasion—and perhaps this was the most important change of all. We must remember that in those days, when an enemy might suddenly attack a village at any time, the ceorls could never be sure of keeping their houses and fields and crops from being destroyed. We have already seen three ways in which the Saxons tried to make themselves more safe: they made a navy, they drilled and strengthened the fyrd, and they built fortified towns. But only a few of them could live in towns, most had to remain in the villages where their land was. And serving with the fyrd was all very well for the country as a whole, but it took the ceorls away from defending their own lands.

So the ceorls began to look around for some one who would defend their lands for them. Naturally, they turned for help to the nearest great lord, whether he was a thegn or an eorl. Usually, the lord consented to protect the ceorl and his family and property, if the ceorl would pay the lord for doing so. There

was very little money in those days, and so the ceorl could only pay his lord by serving him, or by sending him presents of fish, corn, eggs, or other produce when he needed it.

**The Beginning of Feudalism.**—Very often the ceorl gave up his land altogether to the lord, on condition that the lord should protect him. Then the lord returned the land to the ceorl to cultivate, and the ceorl promised to give some of the produce to the lord, and keep the rest for himself and his family. Thus the land had changed owners. Formerly it had belonged to the ceorl who cultivated it, now it belonged to the lord. The lord and the ceorl each owed a duty to the other, the lord had to protect the ceorl, the ceorl had to help to keep the lord, and fight for him when he needed him.

This custom was called *commendation*, because the ceorl *commended* himself to the protection of the lord. It was a queer thing to do, but it was the only way for the ceorls to make sure of being defended. In fact, all Europe, and not only England, was being troubled by invaders. Everywhere was so disturbed that this time is often called the *Dark Ages*. And therefore commendation became quite common in other countries as well as England. In this way every ceorl soon had an *overlord*, and each overlord had a number of ceorls who were his *vassals* or *tenants*. When this system of defending and helping one another had spread all over Europe, it was called *feudalism*. We shall read much more about it in the next chapter.

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER IV

- 1 Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write short notes on them.—Alfred the Great, Guthrum, Treaty of Wedmore, Edward the Elder, Ethelred the Unready; Knut (Canute).

- 2 Make a time chart showing the chief events concerning the Danes (in other countries besides England) between 850 and 1050 A D

3. Questions :—

- (a) Why did the Danes invade England? Where did they come from?
- (b) Describe the coming of a band of Danes as though you were one of them
- (c) What was the *Danelaw*? Where was it, and why?
- (d) What do the following Danish names mean?—Ashby; Kirkby, Whitby, Grimsby, Norwich, Middlewich, Ipswich, Giggleswick, Lowestoft, Mabelthorpe, Cleethorpes
- (e) Make a list of former Danish settlements near your home. Explain the meaning of as many of their names as you can
- (f) In what ways did the Danish invasions alter the life of the English?
- (g) What do you know about the Saxon army and navy?
- (h) How were English towns protected in the time of the Saxons and Danes?
- (i) Make a list of English town-names ending in *-port*. What can you learn from their names?
- (j) What do the names of the Five Boroughs mean? By what people was each of them founded?
- (k) How did the Danish invasions affect trade?
- (l) What was *commendation*? Why was it so common in the Dark Ages?

4. Source Exercises :—

(1) "When the Danes dispersed to their ships, then ought the *fyrd* to have gone out to oppose them if they should land. But the *fyrd* went home. And when they were eastward, then was the *fyrd* kept westwards, and when they were southwards, then was our *fyrd* northwards. Then were all the *Witan* summoned to the king, to counsel how the land might be defended. But although something was then decided, it did not last even one month. At last there was no chief who would gather a *fyrd*, nor at the last would even one *shire* assist another."

- (a) This passage is from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Find out all you can about it
- (b) What can you learn from this passage about (i) the author, (ii) the Saxons, (iii) the Danes?
- (c) Write notes on the words in italics



(11) "Let no man bargain out of *port*, but let him have the witness of the *port reeve*, or of some other truthful man who can be trusted. No cattle shall be bought and sold except within cities, and that before three faithful witnesses."

- (a) This passage is from the laws of King Edward the Elder. Find out all you can about him.
- (b) What does this law order, and why?
- (c) Who do you suppose the *port reeve* was? There were other English officials called *shire reeves*. What do you suppose were their duties? Can you think of any modern word which comes from the words *shire reeve*?

5. Draw maps of —

- (a) The old and the new homes (in other countries as well as England) of the Danes.
- (b) Knut's empire.
- (c) England in the Dark Ages, showing the Danelaw and the chief Danish settlements. Where are most of these settlements, and why?

6. On page 27 is a picture of the remains of an old Danish ship. Draw a picture, or make a model, of the ship as you think it was when the Danes were using it.

7. Draw pictures, or make models, of Danish people in the clothing worn by the Danes.

## CHAPTER V

### THE NORMAN CONQUEST AND FEUDALISM

WE have now read, in this book, about more than a thousand years of British and English history. During this time we have learnt about invasion after invasion by many different races. After the country had been conquered by Goidels and Britons and Romans (as we read in Chapter I.), all these three races were driven away by the Anglo-Saxons, then the Anglo-Saxons were driven from a large part of eastern England by the Danes, and a Dane (Knut) was one of the greatest kings England had known.

**The Norman Conquest.**—Now these Danes—who are often called *Norsemen*, or “North-men”—had invaded many other countries besides England—France, Italy, and even America. In France they changed their name from “Norsemen” to *Normans*, and in the north of France was the Danish kingdom of *Normandy*. You will have read in other books how, in the year 1066, Duke William of Normandy conquered England and became its king. This *Norman Conquest* (in a way, it was really the last of the Danish invasions) caused great changes in the government of England, about which you will have learnt already. Let us see, now, how it changed the ordinary lives of the people after the long years of fighting were over.

The Norman Conquest was, of course, one of those attacks which the Saxons were always fearing. We have seen in the last chapter how they tried to secure safety by “commending” themselves to some lord

to defend them. Imagine that you are a "ceorl" in a Saxon village, and consider what happens to you during the Norman Conquest. You are the "vassal" of your village "thegn," and you help him to fight the foe when he reaches your district. But you are a Saxon, and Saxons everywhere are being defeated. Your thegn and his army are beaten, and your district is in the hands of the Normans.

VVILLEM VENIT: BAGIAS



WILLIAM I IN ARMOUR (FROM THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY)

(From Tout's 'A History of Great Britain')

You are only a ceorl, and so the Norman general takes no notice of you. But your thegn is more important, and he has to be punished for daring to resist William the Conqueror. His lands are taken from him and given to a Norman. This means that your overlord is now a Norman instead of a Saxon. You do not like it, your old thegn was a Saxon like yourself, speaking the same language. Your new Norman overlord is a foreigner, and you cannot

understand him because he speaks French. But it is useless to resist any longer, so you settle down to your ordinary life again, and in a few years' time there is not so much difference, after all, except that you now have an overlord you do not like

**Doomsday Book.**—This sort of thing went on all over England. Norman followers of William the Conqueror took the places of the Saxon thegns of the time of King Edward the Confessor. But William was determined that his *barons* (as the Norman nobles were called) should obey him better than the thegns had obeyed their Saxon kings. He resolved to find out exactly how much land each baron held; how much tax (*geld*, or "gold," as the Saxons called it) he could afford to pay the king, and also how many men there were in England fit to be soldiers when they were needed. So he sent round his agents to every village in England to find out everything they could about it. When the agents had all brought back the information William wanted, he had it all written down in a huge book, called *Doomsday Book*. This book is still in existence, and from it we can learn very much indeed about England in the time of the Normans.

**Birmingham in Doomsday Book.**—Let us see what Doomsday Book says about Birmingham. It was written in the year 1086, and at that time Birmingham was one of the smallest villages in England. It is now the biggest city in the country, except London, and has over 1,000,000 inhabitants. In 1086 there were fifty inhabitants at most—not enough to fill the smallest street in Birmingham to-day.

Here is Doomsday Book's account of Birmingham —

"Richard holds BERMINGHAM of Wilham. There are 4 hides. There is land for 6 ploughs there is 1 plough in the demesne. There are 5 villeins and 4 bordars and 2 ploughs. There is a wood half a mile long and 4 furlongs broad. In the time of King Edward it was worth

20 shillings, and it is still worth the same. In King Edward's time Ulwine held it "

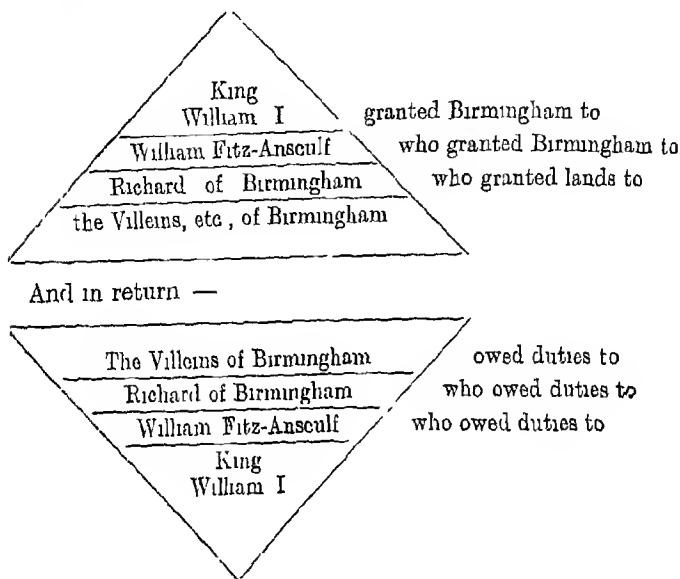
There are three words there which need explaining, and then we can see how much we can learn from this account. *Demesne* is a French word, meaning "domain"—that is, the private land belonging to the landlord, Richard. *Villeins* is another word brought in by these French-speaking Normans, and it means the same as the Saxon word "ceorl". The *bordars* were poorer men than the villeins, owning very little land except a small plot near their cottage, and for this reason they are often called *cottars*, or "cottagers."

**The Norman Conquest of Birmingham.**—What happened to Birmingham during the Norman Conquest? In the last line of the account in Domesday Book, we learn that "in King Edward's time Ulwine held it." Ulwine is a Saxon name, and he was the Saxon thegn or overlord of Birmingham before the Conquest. But the Normans beat him, as they beat all the Saxons, and his lands (with other villages besides Birmingham) were given to a Norman noble.

This Norman nobleman was William Fitz-Ansculf, and he is the "William" mentioned in the first line. He received Birmingham, along with the other lands of Ulwine, as a reward for helping King William I to conquer the Saxons. In return, he had to promise to pay taxes to the king, to fight for him, and to make the villeins or ceorls fight too, when they were needed.

But William Fitz-Ansculf was a great man, and Birmingham was a tiny place, hardly worth his while to trouble about. So William Fitz-Ansculf handed over Birmingham to a less important Norman, Richard, who had to promise Fitz-Ansculf to pay him the taxes which Birmingham owed to the king, to fight when Fitz-Ansculf wanted him, and to make the villagers of Birmingham fight too, when necessary.

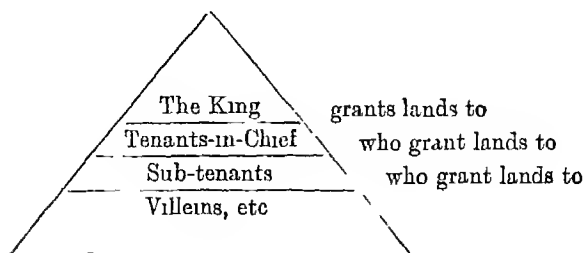
We can represent what happened in a diagram like this .—



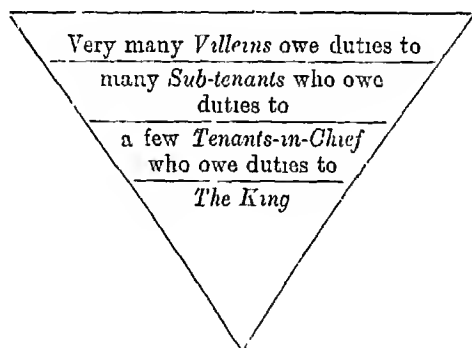
Thus, William Fitz-Ansculf was a *tenant* of the king, Richard of Birmingham was a tenant of Fitz-Ansculf, and the Birmingham villagers were tenants of Richard, who was their *overlord*. Richard's overlord was William, and William's overlord was King William I. Fitz-Ansculf, who was the tenant of the king himself, was called a *Tenant-in-Chief*, Richard, who was only the tenant of somebody less than the king, was called a *Sub-tenant*.

**The Feudal System.**—William the Conqueror and his followers shared out in this way the land of all England. There were a small number of tenants-in-chief, holding their lands of the king, there were a much larger

number of sub-tenants, and a still larger number of villeins. So we can make our diagrams represent the arrangement of the whole of England, in this way :—



And in return —



That is what we mean by Feudalism, or the *Feudal System*, as it is sometimes called. It is much the same as the feudalism of the Saxons, about which we read in the last chapter. But it is much more developed than Saxon feudalism. Under the feudalism of the Normans it is not only the villagers who have an overlord to obey, but the overlord as well, and *his* overlord, and so on, until we reach the king. And even

kings said that God was their overlord, and that they were God's *vassals*, just as the tenants-in-chief were the king's vassals, as the sub-tenants were vassals of the tenants-in-chief, and as the sub-tenants had villagers for vassals.

**Homage.**—In this way every man had an overlord, and every overlord had men as his vassals. Now the Latin for *man* is *homo*, and promising an overlord that you would be his "man" or "vassal" was called *homage*. There was a special ceremony for doing homage. The vassal knelt before the overlord with his hands raised together, as if to pray, and as the overlord clasped the vassal's hands in his own, the vassal said —

"I become your man from this day forward, of life and limb and earthly worship, and unto you I shall be true and faithful, and shall hold faith with you for the lands I hold of you."

After this ceremony they were overlord and vassal, and the vassal was bound to serve his lord, and above all, fight for him. If the vassal was a *villem*, then he simply had to fight himself. If he was a fairly rich sub-tenant he had to bring others, besides himself, to fight.

**Military Tenure.**—Feudalism is, at first, a difficult thing to understand. It includes so many things, and it is hard to remember them all. But of all the many things which we have to connect in our minds with feudalism, there are none so important as these two—landholding, and the promise to fight when needed. Another word for landholding is *tenure*, fighting is *military*, and so *military tenure* describes, in a single phrase, the most important part of feudalism.



## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER V

1. Make time charts showing the chief events, between 1050 and 1100, connected with (a) the Norman Conquest of England, (b) the Norman Conquest of the district where you live

## 2 Questions —

- (a) What different races have conquered England? Which of them have helped to make up the English people?
- (b) Describe the Norman Conquest of your district as though you were taking part in it as (a) a Saxon ceorl, (b) a Norman noble
- (c) What was Domesday Book? Who had it written, and why? What did it say?
- (d) Write an account of your town or village in 1086 as it might have been in Domesday Book. Then try to find out what Domesday Book actually says about it
- (e) If you can find a Domesday Book description of any place near where you live, write an account, from what it tells you, of the Norman Conquest of that place
- (f) What did William the Conqueror do with England when he had conquered it?
- (g) What had feudal overlords and vassals to do for one another?
- (h) What was *Feudalism*? Can you make any other diagrams to represent it, in addition to those given on pages 38-39?
- (i) What do you know about the following?—Normans, vassal, overlord, baron, hide, demesne, villen, bordar, cottar, tenant, tenant-in-chief, sub-tenant; homage, military tenure.

## 3. Source Exercise.—

“Robert Fitz-Theobald holds SHIFNAL of Earl Roger. Earl Morcar used to hold it. There are *7½ hides* paying *geld*. In the *demesne* are 9 ox-teams and 26 *serfs*, and there are 37 *villens* and 6 *bordars* with 27 ox teams. There is a wood big enough to fatten 300 pigs. In the time of King Edward it was worth £15, and afterwards 6s. It now pays £15 rent.” (*Domesday Book*.)

- (a) Shifnal was one of 357 manors held in Shropshire by Roger Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury. Find out all you can about him
- (b) Who were “Earl Morcar” and “King Edward”? What do you know about them?
- (c) What can you learn from this passage about the Norman Conquest of Shifnal?
- (d) Make a diagram (see pages 38-39) showing the various lords, tenants, etc., of Shifnal in 1086, and their connection with one another
- (e) Write notes on the words in italics.

## CHAPTER VI

### NORMAN NOBLES AT HOME

WHEN William of Normandy had conquered England he had to keep it in order. He had made himself master of the English people, and the English people disliked having a Norman for their king. Some of them revolted, and all of us know something about Hereward the Wake, who was the last English leader to be beaten. But even when they were beaten the English had to be kept obedient to their foreign masters. We must remember that William I. and all the kings of England for a hundred years after the Norman Conquest *were* foreigners. So were the Norman nobles. They spoke French, they had foreign ways, and the English would not have obeyed them if they had not been compelled to do so.

**Norman Castles.**—Soon after the Conquest, therefore, most of the great Norman barons were busy building castles in the strongest places they could find. In Chapter IX we shall learn what these castles were like, but we must realise, now, what they were for. They were surrounded by thick, high walls, and other defences, and in time of fighting the Norman barons and their followers could take refuge in these castles and be safe from their enemies. It was very difficult to capture a castle in the Middle Ages, but it was very easy to rush out of a castle, beat the enemy when he was not expecting you, and get back

quickly again to safety. For this reason the side which held most castles usually won in a medieval war.

Each nobleman who was a follower of William the Conqueror built a castle for defending the villages (or *manors* as they were now called) which the king had given him. William Fitz-Ansculf, of whom we read in the last chapter, held forty-four manors near Birmingham, as well as others elsewhere, and so he built a castle at Dudley, on the edge of a hill about ten miles from Birmingham itself. Another famous Norman noble, Roger Montgomery, received as many as 357 manors in Shropshire. He therefore built a castle at Shrewsbury, the chief town of Shropshire, and from that time he was called Earl Roger of Shrewsbury.

In this way castles were built all over England. But before long most of these castles were no longer needed, because the English people soon came to like the rule of the Normans. The Norman kings were much stronger rulers than the old English kings had been, and they kept the country in better order. Besides, the Norman kings were as fair to their English subjects as they were to their Norman subjects. It was therefore quite natural that the conquered English soon became contented. Before long the Normans and English were quite friendly, so that they were soon one united people, and the Normans, as much as the Saxons, called themselves Englishmen.

**The King and the Castles.**—Some castles still remained, because warfare was very common in the Middle Ages, and both the king and the nobles wanted places of safe refuge whenever it broke out. Usually, however, the king kept control of these castles, instead of letting the nobles who lived there do as they liked with them. This was because the king knew that his barons were fond of fighting each other for their lands,

and the only way to keep the country free from fighting was to keep the castles under his own control. On the borders of Scotland and Wales, however, there were more castles, and the barons there controlled them themselves. This was necessary in order to defend England against the Scots and the Welsh, who used to invade the villages and steal the cattle from them.

**Travelling Barons.**—We have just seen that Roger of Shrewsbury owned 357 manors. Most of these, of course, were held by sub-tenants who were Roger's vassals. But Roger himself held quite a number of them, and he used to live in all of these in turn. This was the custom of all the Norman nobles, and even of the king himself. The king and his court did not stay in one place as they usually do now. Instead, they moved about from manor to manor, and the nobles did the same.

There was a good reason for this. Every noble had a small "court" of his own, just as the king had a large one. These followers all needed food, and there were too many of them to be fed in one village all the year round. So they travelled about, around all the manors held by the baron, and each manor had to be ready for the lord's coming, with plenty of food for him and his followers.

This meant that the baron had to have a large house in every manor which he used to visit regularly. It was called the *Manor House*, and it was usually the biggest building (except, sometimes, the church) in the village. He and his followers lived in this house and near it, so long as there was food for them. When the food began to run short they moved on to the next manor.

To us this seems the *wrong* way of doing things. Why was not the food brought to the baron and his

followers, at some fixed home, instead of their having to go to where the food was? The reason was this: In the Middle Ages the roads were very bad indeed. There was no road surface such as we have to-day. In muddy weather it was quite impossible for carts to move at all along most of the roads. Now food would have to be conveyed in carts, and so, if the barons had stayed at one place all the winter, the food



*Photo Frith & Co Ltd*

A MEDIEVAL MANOR HOUSE (STOKESAY CASTLE, SHROPSHIRE)

for which they waited might never have reached them. It was much easier for the baron and his followers to travel on horseback from manor to manor.

It was only the wealthier barons, the owners of many manors, who lived in this way. Many sub-tenants who held only one manor stayed there all the year round. But these lords had only a few followers, and so they could get all the food they needed from the village in which they lived.

**The Manor House.**—We must not imagine that these manor houses were anything like the homes of country gentlemen nowadays. Nearly all of them were built of wood, like the cottages of the villagers. There were no fine staircases, often there were no staircases at all, instead, all the house was on one floor, like a modern bungalow. There were no corridors, either. In small manor houses the only way of getting from one end of the house to the other was by passing through the rooms in between. In big manor houses there were often several staircases, and to get from one set of rooms to another it was necessary to go outside, enter another door, and mount another staircase.

**The Great Hall.**—The chief room in every manor house was the *Hall*. This was the largest room in the house, and it was used for all sorts of purposes, including meals—and so there were tables in the hall. But it was used for other purposes, too, and so the tables were simply boards on trestles, and could be taken away when the meal was over. At one end of the hall was a low platform, or *dais*, and on this there was a fixed table, where the lord himself, his wife and children, and the more important people sat. The servants, and people not of high rank, sat at the trestle tables in the lower part of the hall, where the lord could watch them as they ate, and see that the meal was conducted properly. In this large hall there was usually no fireplace, but only the same sort of stone slab that the Saxons had had in their cottages, with the hole in the roof to let out the smoke. This slab was in the middle of the room, and when the inhabitants gathered near the fire on a winter's night they really were sitting *round* the fire, and not half-round it, as we do.

Rushes were still the only covering for the floors,

even in the houses of the rich. The walls were covered, not with paper or distemper, but with hanging cloths. These cloths were called the *arras*, and often they were made of *tapestry* specially woven (by the ladies of the household) into favourite patterns or even pictures. This arras was needed to keep out the draughts, but it was also very popular with the children, who used it for hide-and-seek and other games.

It was at night that the greatest change took place in the hall. Tables were removed and heaps of rushes or straw thrown down all over the floor—for beds! For there were no special bedrooms. Most of the household slept in the great hall—and the dogs and cats, of which there were many, slept with them. Many of them never bothered to undress at nights. For one thing, it was too cold, but in any case, medieval people were never very clean in their habits.

Usually there was a door at each end of the hall. One of these doors led into the kitchen, which was often quite small. As often as possible cooking was done out of doors—it was too smoky inside in those days of no fireplaces. The other door led into the most comfortable room in the house. It was often at the sunny end of the house, and so it was called the *solar*, or “sun-room.”

**The Solar.**—But the solar was meant to be warm, even when the weather was not sunny. It was the private sitting-room of the lord and lady of the manor, and so it was the only room in the house with a proper fireplace. Besides this, it had chairs, they were made of wood, without cushions, but they were far more comfortable than the rough benches in the hall. Often, too, they would be covered with the skins of animals, and there were skin rugs on the floor. The solar was made to look more cosy by painting the walls and roof. Blue and gold and red were favourite colours, and

often the ceiling was painted with gold stars on a blue ground, to look like the sky at night-time.

Besides these three rooms (the hall, the kitchen, and the solar) there was usually nothing else, in most manor houses, except a few storerooms and pantries. Food—and especially flour and salted meat—had to be kept right through the winter, because fresh food could not be got from other places, and so the larders were one of the most important parts of the building. In the larder of one manor house we are told that there were at one time “the carcasses of twenty oxen and fifteen pigs, 8,000 herrings, twenty pounds of almonds, thirty pounds of rice, six barrels of lard, two quarters of salt”—besides the flour needed for bread.

From what we have read in this chapter it is easy to see that even the lives of the nobles in Norman times were far less comfortable than ours. And it was worse still, because there were no amusements except the ordinary games, and hardly anybody could read books. In a later chapter we shall see how the nobles managed to spend their spare time.

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER VI

- 1 Find out as much as you can about the following —Roger Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, Robert Bellême, Earl of Shrewsbury, the Palatine Earldom of Shrewsbury, the Bayeux Tapestry.
2. Questions .—
  - (a) Make a list (with dates) of long wars in the Middle Ages. Why were medieval wars so long?
  - (b) Find out who built the Norman castle nearest to your home, how many manors he held, and their names
  - (c) For what purposes were castles used?
  - (d) Which castles were controlled by the king, and which by the nobles? Why was this?
  - (e) In what different ways did the tenants-in-chief make use of the many manors granted to them?



## EXERCISES

49

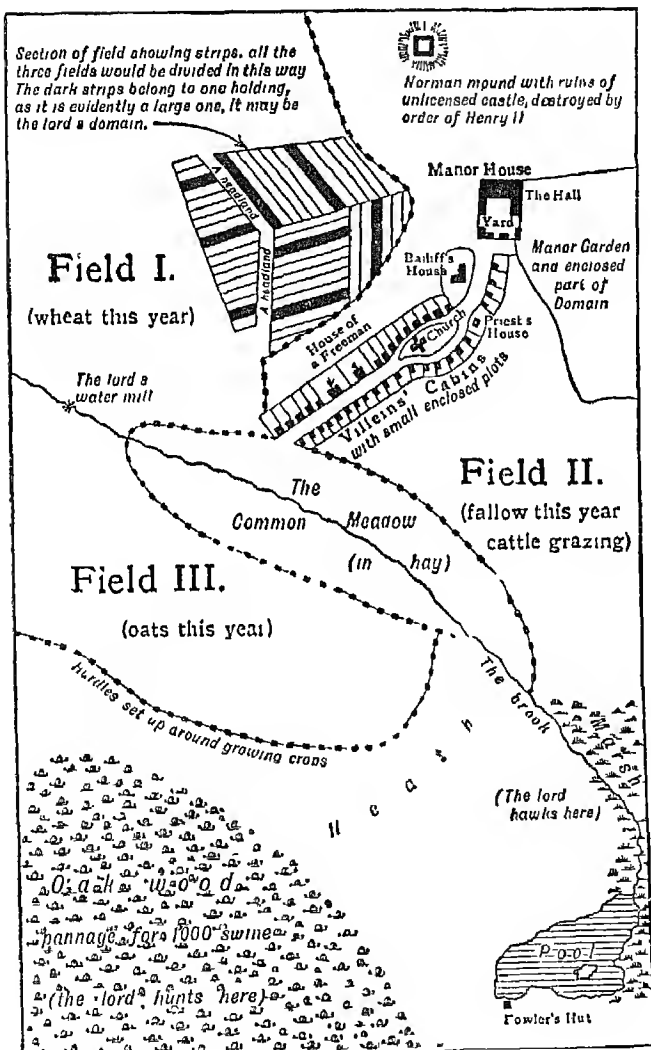
- (f) Write an account of your life as though you were one of the followers of a baron.
  - (g) Imagine you are a villen awaiting the arrival in your village of the lord of your manor. Write an account of your doings.
  - (h) Describe a manor house (if possible, one you have seen)
  - (i) In what ways was a medieval manor house less comfortable than most modern houses?
  - (j) Write an account of a meal at a manor house as though you are (1) a servant, (ii) a lord or lady
  - (k) Write an account of a day in your life as though you are a boy or girl living in a medieval manor house
  - (l) What do you know of the following?—Manor, manor house, baron, arras, tapestry, solar
- 3 Make a plan of a medieval manor house (preferably one you have seen).
- 4 Draw a map showing the lands ruled by the Norman kings of England. What can you learn from the map about these kings?
5. Make models or pictures of (a) a medieval manor house (interior and exterior); (b) a Norman nobleman in armour, (c) a Norman nobleman in the ordinary dress of the time.

## CHAPTER VII

### WORK ON THE MANOR THE "MANORIAL SYSTEM"

IF we wish to realise what a medieval manor looked like, we must first get rid of many of our notions of a modern village. Of course, there was usually a church, as now—perhaps the same one that is still standing. But hardly any other building in the village would be of stone, except the manor house—and not always that. The cottages were of wood and plaster, or even mud. There were no well-made lanes and no hedges round the fields. Instead, as we read in Chapter III., the fields were open, without anything to enclose them. And instead of being clustered round the farm to which they belonged (as fields are now), there were only two or three of them—enormous fields which were sometimes a mile or more in length.

**The Open Fields**—Each of these fields was split up into a number of narrow strips, as in Saxon times, each strip being about an acre in extent. The size of the strips was fixed in this way. A rod (or "pole," or "perch"),  $5\frac{1}{2}$  yards long, was used to measure the width, 4 rods (the length of a cricket-pitch nowadays) was allowed for the width of every strip, and ten times that distance for its length. This gave 4,840 square yards as the size of an average strip, and that is still the size of our acre. When the strip was being ploughed, each furrow would naturally be 220 yards



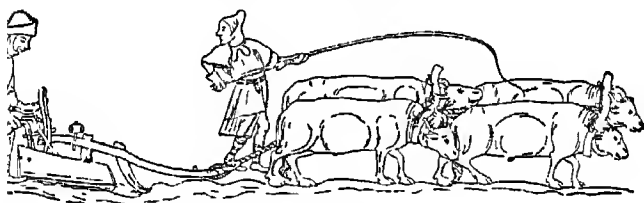
in length, and so 220 yards was called a "*furrow-long*," or, as we now spell it, a *furlong*. It was usual to drive seventy-two furlows up and down each acre strip, and as the strips were each supposed to represent enough land for a day's ploughing, we can see that the ploughman was forced to walk 9 miles in the course of his day's work.

**Villeins.**—In the time of the Saxons the land had been divided out amongst the families of the village, but this was altered after the Norman Conquest. The Normans called the village labourers *villeins*, from the French word *ville*, meaning a town or village, and it was customary for each villein to have about thirty of the acre strips—ten in each of the three fields into which the village was divided. As the Saxon custom of leaving one field fallow every year was continued, the villeins had about twenty strips at a time in cultivation. These thirty strips, forming the villein's allotment, were called a *virgate*. They were scattered about the fields, so that the strips of all the villeins were mixed up together, and had to be separated by heaps of rubbish, called *balks*. And in among the villeins' strips were the strips of the lord, whose "allotment" (including the farm land and orchards round the manor house) was called the *demesne* (or *domain*), or "lordship."

Every villein was entitled to his *virgate* of land, and the lord could not take it from him. But the strips were changed about from time to time (sometimes every year), so that everybody had a turn with the best land. We must remember, too, that the villeins were the vassals, or tenants, of the lord, and had to pay him rent for their holdings. Only this rent, like most payments in the Middle Ages, was not made in money. Instead, each of the villeins had to do *week-work*, that is, to cultivate the lord's land for

one, two, or perhaps three days a week. The rest of the week was his own, for tilling his own allotment, except that in times of extra hard work, such as harvest, villeins had to put in overtime (or *boon-work*) for the lord. As these were just the times when the lord wanted more leisure for his own strips, this *boon-work* sometimes made the villeins very discontented, as we shall read in another chapter.

**The Bailiff.**—Even at ordinary times the villeins needed watching, or they would stay away from their *boon-work* on the demesne and work on their own



PLOUGHING IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

(From Gardiner's "*A Student's History of England*")

as instead. As we saw in the last chapter, the lord of the manor was very often absent, either on business or living on some other manor of his. For this reason he had to have some one on each of his manors to see that the demesne was properly tilled, and this person was called the *bailiff*, or *reeve*. There is an old book (written in the reign of Edward I. by a lawyer who was in prison and wanted to pass away the time) from which we can learn what the bailiff's duties were:—

"The bailiff should rise early in the morning and see that the plough-teams are yoked, then he should walk round and inspect the tilled fields, woods, meadows,

and pastures. Then he should visit the ploughers at their work, and take care that the oxen are not unyoked till a full day's work has been done "

In fact, it was the bailiff's business to see that no man cheated his lord, and so he needed to be constantly on the watch among the villagers and other people with whom the lord had dealings

There was a reeve, or bailiff, among the twenty-nine pilgrims, whom Chaucer describes in his "Canterbury Tales" (see Chapter XI). Besides being the greatest English poet in the Middle Ages, Chaucer was a tax-collector, and he was a shrewd judge of men's character. This is how he describes the reeve —

" Well could he keep a garner or a bin ;  
There was no auditor could on him win  
Well wist he, by the drought and by the rain,  
The yielding of his seed, and of his grain  
All the lord's cattle, sheep, and dairy,  
His swine, his horse, his store, and his poultry,  
Was wholly under this reeve's governing  
He had been bound to do the reckoning  
Since his lord reached the age of twenty years  
There was no man could catch him in arrears "

**Manorial Courts.**—Besides keeping the villeins to their work, the bailiff might have to judge between them when disputes arose. Medieval peasants were hard, rough men, and they had plenty of quarrels, and so there had to be special manorial law courts to see that justice was done. Usually these courts were held, not by the bailiff, but by a higher officer called the *steward*; or even by the lord himself, if he was living on the manor. Every three weeks or so this *Court Baron* would meet to settle the various disputes, and at longer intervals, when there was some serious crime to be punished, another law court, called the *Court Leet*, met to deal with the matter

We can easily imagine the sort of quarrels which needed to be settled. When a villein died there were disputes about who should have his land, sometimes one man's cattle strayed into another man's corn, and the first man was made to pay damages, or, perhaps, a villein was discovered stealing fruit, or firewood, or hay, from the demesne.

**Woodland and Meadow.**—No doubt the villeins of the Middle Ages were often tempted to steal, since they were never very well off, and, indeed, the word "villain" has come to mean a dishonest man. But there was less temptation to such dishonesty than we might think. It is true that a yearly allotment of about twenty acres was not enough to maintain a villein and his family all the year round. But we must remember that these men had far fewer expenses than a modern farm labourer. Except for their week-work and boon-work, and special presents to the lord, such as eggs at Easter and poultry at Christmas, they had very little to pay. There were always plenty of woods in the Middle Ages, where the peasants could get as much firewood as they wished. And as most of the trees were oak or beech, the pigs were turned out there in the autumn to feed (for nothing) on acorns and beech-nuts.

Besides the woods, every village had its meadow-land, and many villeins had their share of the hay harvest. Then there was plenty of land beyond the three fields, some of it rough waste, some of it rich in pasture. All this land was *common*—that is, it belonged to all the villagers equally, and there they could feed their sheep and their bullocks. The latter were so hard worked at the plough that they were always too tough for meat, and as the sheep were wanted for wool, and were rarely any bigger than the sheep-dogs themselves, the chief meat of the Middle

Ages was pork, and so there had to be a swineherd in every village

**The Mill.**—When the harvest was gathered in and the corn threshed, there was very little carting away from the village. Nearly all the grain was needed by the villagers, who made not only their own bread, but most things they needed—even clothes, and boots if they wanted them. Still, the grain had to be ground, and the only place where this could be done was the mill—a water-mill if there was a stream strong enough, if not, a windmill instead.

Usually the mill belonged to the lord, and the miller was his servant. Sometimes, however, the miller himself owned the mill. In any case, the villagers usually paid for the grinding of their corn, not with money, but by giving the miller some of the corn for himself. Like many men in the Middle Ages, the millers were often none too honest, and they had a reputation for keeping back more than their fair share of the grain. In one of the "Canterbury Tales," Chaucer says about a miller —

"A thief he was, forsooth, of corn and meal,  
And that a sly one, using for to steal."

The miller had a special work to do, but even he often had some strips in the open fields which he cultivated when he was not busy at the mill. So had the blacksmith, and the carpenter, and others who had different tasks from most of the villeins. Among these special workers was one whom we should expect to find living differently. This was the village parson. Most villages had their own church and their own priest, and the priest, who was very often a poor man's son, remained a poor man himself, tilling his own strips with the other villagers in the open fields, except on holy days, when the villagers followed him to church.



## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER VII

1. Find out as much as you can about Chaucer and "The Canterbury Tales," and then write a short composition about them

## 2. Questions :—

- (a) What modern land-measures are connected with the Three-Field System ?
- (b) How long would a medieval ploughman take to plough your school playing-field ? How many fields this size would make a virgate ? Bearing this in mind, what would you say was the chief difference between a medieval villen and a modern farm-labourer ?
- (c) What exactly is meant by each of the four things ("tilled fields, woods, meadows, and pastures") mentioned in the extract on pages 53-54 ? What would each of them be used for ?
- (d) What different classes of people lived on a medieval manor ?
- (e) What servants of the lord lived on the manor, and what were the duties of each ?
- (f) What were the duties owed (i) by villeins to their lords ; (ii) by lords to the villeins ?
- (g) Write an account of a week's work on a medieval manor as though you were (i) a bailiff, (ii) a villen, (iii) a miller, (iv) a swineherd, (v) a priest
- (h) By what different methods were order and justice maintained on a medieval manor ?
- (i) In what different ways would the Three-Field System make it difficult to introduce new methods of farming ?
- (j) What were the chief (i) good points, (ii) bad points, about the Three-Field System ?
- (k) What do you know about the following ?—Furlong, virgate, villen, balks, demesne, week-work, boon-work, bailiff, reeve, steward ; Court Baron, Court Leet, commons

## 3 Source Exercises :—

(1) "To all to whom the present writing shall come, greeting from Morgan Gogh Know ye that I have granted to John Druwer a cottage, and three acres, one rood of *arable land* in the fields of Modbury, whereof one *acre* lies in Brokerig field, between the *lord's land* on each side, one acre lies in Toteombe field, between the lord's land and the land of Thomas Cobbe, three roods in Brokerig between the lord's land and the land

of William Cockes, half an acre there between the land of Thomas Cobbe and the land of Ralph Smale, and half an acre of meadow lies in Stuttilmead, between the meadow of Gilbert the Schoolmaster on each side, with pasture for one plough-beast and two draught beasts in common" (Bland, Brown, and Tawney, *Select Documents Illustrating English Economic History* By permission of Messrs G Bell & Son)

- (a) To what class would each man mentioned in this extract belong?
- (b) Draw a plan of this manor of Modbury as you think it may have been, marking on it all the allotments mentioned
- (c) Write notes on the words in italics.

(ii) "23 November, 1278 Michael the Reeve complains of Richer, son of Jocelin, and Richard the Reeve and his wife, that they charged him, in the churchyard, on Sunday the 30th October, with having collected his own hay by the labour services due to the lord, and of having reaped his own corn in autumn by the *boon-works* done by the lord's tenants, and with having released the tenants from their usual services, on condition that they leased their land to him at a low price" (Bland, Brown, and Tawney, *Select Documents Illustrating English Economic History*. By permission of Messrs G Bell & Son)

- (a) Explain exactly what Michael the Reeve is supposed to have done
- (b) Where would this complaint be made, and who would settle the quarrel?
- (c) How long do you suppose that Michael and Richard had been unfriendly?
- (d) Write notes on the words in italics

(iii) "There is a meadow called 'Clayhurst Meadow,' and it contains 35 acres, half a rood, and 13 *perches* of meadowland and pasture. To the south of it there is a piece of meadowland and pasture containing 10 acres and 7 *perches*, but it is called 'Twelve acres,' and every year it is divided into 12 *strips*, measured out equally by rod, of these 12 strips the lord has, in one year, numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11, and the heirs of Freman and Walter the Reeve have between them in the same year, numbers 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12. Next year the lord has the strips which the tenants had before, and the tenants have the lord's strips. Thus every year the lord has 5 acres and 3½ *perches*" (*Selden Society Publications*, Vol. II. By permission of the Council of the Selden Society)

- (a) What kinds of tenants are *not* mentioned in this extract ?
  - (b) What is the difference between this land and the land usually shared out among the villagers ?
  - (c) Write notes on the words in italics
- 4 Make plans of —
- (a) Any medieval village
  - (b) Your own town or village as it probably appeared in the Middle Ages
  - (c) The three fields of a medieval village, showing (1) the scattered strips held by any one villein, (2) the demesne, including the lord's strips
- 5 Draw pictures or make models of medieval country folk to illustrate the clothing of the period.
-

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Christendom and the Holy Catholic Church.—How many of us, when in the Creed we say that we believe in "the Holy Catholic Church," realise exactly what we mean? *Catholic* is simply a Greek word meaning "universal," and in the Middle Ages the "Catholic" Church really was the "universal" Church—at any rate in Western Europe. Until the sixteenth century there was hardly a single person in Europe who was not a Christian, and for that reason Europe was often called *Christendom*. Except in Russia and the Balkan Peninsula, every Christian belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. It is known as the "Roman" Church because the bishop of Rome was its head, and he was called the *Pope* (from a Latin word *papa*, or "father") of the whole Catholic Church.

To most men (and especially Englishmen) in the Middle Ages the Pope seemed far away. But every man felt that he was a member of the Catholic Church. In each village everybody went to the village church, and most villages had their own priests. Besides, the special occasions which the Church used to celebrate every year were holy days, and on holy days there were not only services in church but special games and rejoicings, in fact, each *holy day* was a *holiday*. For this reason the villagers regarded the holy days as the best days in their year, and that bound them still closer to the Catholic Church.

It was because the people of the Middle Ages thought so much of their church that they usually built their church buildings of stone. Very often



A VILLAGE HOLIDAY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

(Norman church tower in background)

(Reduced from Longmans' "Historical Illustrations")

the church was the only stone building in the village, and for that reason medieval churches have lasted longer than most medieval buildings. In most villages in England the church is at least 500 years old, and

there are very few big towns which have not at least one church as old as that

**The Friars.**—These old churches are still standing in thousands to remind us of the religious life of the medieval village. But in the Middle Ages (as now) some villages were too small, or too poor, to have a church of their own. And some parish priests were too lazy or too old to look after their parishes. And so there were other sorts of clergymen in the Middle Ages, whose work was to look after those who had no priest of their own. These extra clergymen were called either *Friars* or *Canons*.

"Friar" is simply the English form of the French word (*frère*) for "brother." There were several important "brotherhoods" of friars. The two most important of all were the *Franciscans* and the *Dominicans*. They were called after their founders, *Saint Francis of Assisi* and *Saint Dominic*, and sometimes, from the colour of the dress they wore, they were also called *Grey Friars* and *Black Friars*.

These friars had their "friaries" (branch offices, as we might call them) in various places in England and elsewhere. But they did not live in them. It was the duty of every friar to go about from place to place preaching and teaching and, like the disciples in the New Testament, they were to have no money of their own. Instead, they were to live on what people gave them and to obtain lodgings wherever they could. For this reason they are often called *Mendicant* (or "begging") *Friars*.

**The Canons.**—Like the friars, the Canons helped to minister to those who were without any other priest. But instead of travelling about they lived together in large houses of their own and did their work in their own neighbourhood. In their houses,

they lived strictly according to certain fixed rules which had been laid down by Saint Augustine. From this they got their name of *Augustinians*, or *Austin Canons*, in fact, "canon" is simply a Greek word, meaning "rule."

**The Monks.**—This strict way of living together makes the canons rather unlike the friars, and more like *monks*, who lived together in *monasteries*. But in another way the monks were quite unlike the canons. The name monk means "lonely," and the monks were so called because they rarely left their monasteries or saw anyone else except the other people who lived with them. There were even some monks (called *Carthusians*) each of whom lived in a cell by himself, speaking to no one, and seeing no one—sometimes not even the man who brought him his meals. Carthusian monasteries were called *Charter Houses*, but they were not very common in England.

We must not imagine from this that the ordinary monks were shut up in a sort of prison. They were supposed to live strictly according to rule, and most of them, who obeyed the rules of Saint Benedict, were known as *Benedictines*. But the monasteries were often very big buildings and very fine ones. And they were surrounded by their own fields and woods, in which the monks worked during the daytime.

**The Monks at Work.**—The monks were by no means idle. They had to produce, on their own land enough food to live on, and that meant working like ordinary villagers. There were usually many servants to do the roughest work, but even those monks who did not work in the fields or workshops of the monastery kept themselves busy in other ways. One of the commonest ways for monks to spend their time was in copying books. In those days, before printing was invented, there was only one way of spreading books,

and the knowledge in them, and that was by copying them out in writing. Many of the monks were very clever at writing clearly and neatly, and at ornamenting their *manuscripts* with very fine drawings and paintings.

Besides merely copying old books, many of the monks wrote new ones of their own—especially *chronicles*, which were accounts of what happened in their own time and before it. We must remember that in the Middle Ages hardly anybody except clergymen could read or write. That is why clergymen are still called *clerics*, or *clerks*. Most of the best books, in the early part of the Middle Ages, were written by monks in their monasteries, and it is from the monastic “chronicles” that we learn very much of the history of that time.

Some monasteries were quite small, with only five or six monks living in them. But many of them were fairly large, perhaps holding fifty or more monks. And we must remember that other people, besides the monks, lived in the monastery—servants to look after them, a smith to make horse-shoes and ploughshares, spades and knives, and others besides. All these people had to be fed and lodged. There was a dormitory for the monks and another for the servants, and there was a great dining-hall, or *refectory*, at which all the monks could sit down together.

**The Monks at Meal-times**—One of the rules of these monasteries was that no one should talk at meals. Instead, one of the monks went up into a sort of pulpit in the refectory and read aloud to his brother-monks some instructive book. This will remind us why the monks were living in the monastery at all. They were there to live as religious a life as they could—not by doing good to others, but by keeping themselves as free as possible from all kinds of wrong-doing. They spent their spare time reading these books of learning



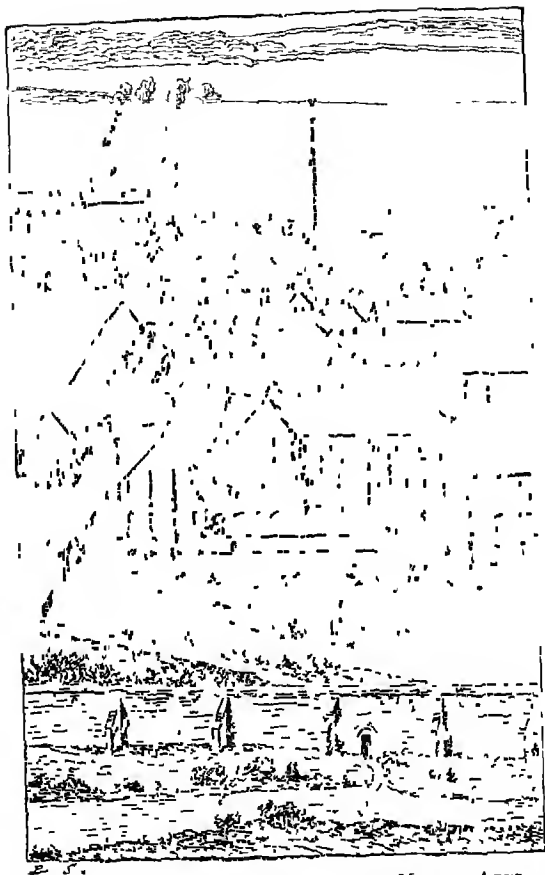
or devotion. And they held in the monastery church, about seven services every day.

**The Monks at Worship.**—The first of these services began very early in the morning, sometimes soon after midnight. For this reason you will often find in the ruins of old monasteries (and there are plenty of them in England) a staircase, passing from the side of the church up to the room which was the monks' dormitory. Down this staircase the monks would rush in a sleepy hurry for the early service, and up it again they would go afterwards for another doze until the next service at daybreak, before the day's work.

**The Monastery Buildings** —With so many services a day the church was much the most important part of every monastery. Although it had only one storey, it was always the highest part of the buildings, and so it was usually built on that side (generally the north) which most needed to be screened from winter winds. These monastery churches were decorated with fine carvings and wall pictures, as well as being built in proportions which made them beautiful in themselves.

Opposite the church, across a courtyard, or *garth*, was usually the refectory. Not only was the refectory itself a large hall, to seat all the inmates of the monastery, but to feed all these people, big kitchens and larders were needed as well. These, with the refectory, filled all that side of the courtyard which was opposite the church.

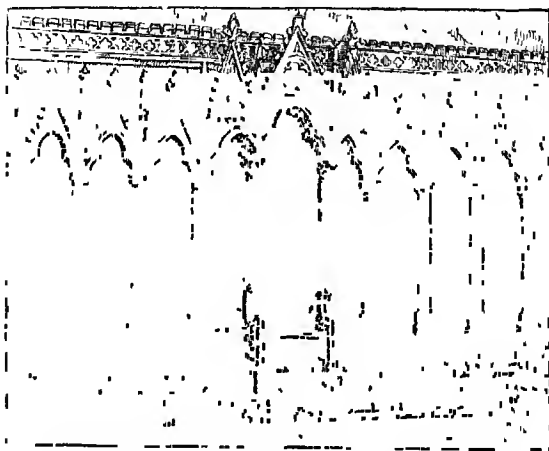
Filling the other two sides of the square court were the dormitories, on the east, as a rule, the dormitory of the monks, on the west, that of the servants. These bedrooms, however (like most of ours), were upstairs, and beneath them were other rooms. Under the servants' dormitory on the west there were cellars, cart-sheds, and stables. Under the monks'



THE MONASTERY OF CÎTEAUX IN THE MIDDLE AGES  
The Headquarters of the *Cistercian* Monks  
(From Lavis and Parmentier's "*Album Historique*,")

dormitory on the east were storerooms, and, much more important than these, there was the *Chapter House*.

*Chapter* was the name given to the whole houseful of monks (it is still used to mean all the clergy who govern a cathedral). The Chapter House was a large room where the monks used to meet to discuss and arrange all the business of the monastery. The seats were usually all round the walls, with a special seat for the *Prior*, or *Abbot*, who ruled over the monks. Since this room was chiefly used by the most important



THE PRIOR'S SEAT, CHAPTER HOUSE, CANTERBURY.

(From Tout's "*A History of Great Britain*")

of the monks, it was usually carved and decorated as finely as the church itself.

Round the garth ran the *Cloisters*. These were a covered-in walking-ground, with openings like windows to let in the light. Sometimes these cloister windows were filled with stained glass, sometimes they were left open. It was in the cloisters, especially in fine weather, that the monks did most of their study and writing of books.

The monasteries were meant to do good, and so

the monks were often willing to help those who needed it. They had a special *guest-house* where travellers could stay for several days, free of cost, there was an *infirmary*, or hospital, where poor people of the neighbourhood, as well as monks, could be nursed when they were ill—and many of the monks were quite skilful doctors. Besides all this, some of the monasteries were very generous in giving alms to the poor.

**The End of the Monasteries.**—Later in the Middle Ages, the monks became unruly and irreligious. This gave a good excuse to King Henry VIII of England, when he needed money, to destroy the monasteries and take their wealth. All English monasteries were abolished in that king's reign, and consequently most remaining monasteries in this country are ruins.

**Cathedrals**—In some cases, however, the monastery church is still standing, even when the rest of the monastery is ruined, because it is being used as a *Cathedral*. As in the Middle Ages, these cathedrals are the chief churches in the districts into which the whole church is divided. Each of these districts is called a *diocese*, and is governed by a *bishop*, who is responsible for seeing that the work and worship of each *parish* in his diocese is properly carried on. Every cathedral contains a bishop's throne (indeed, *cathedra* is simply a Greek word for "throne"). The priest who is in charge of the cathedral itself is called a *dean*, and he is assisted in the cathedral services by priests called *canons*, whose duties are in many ways like those of the canons of the Middle Ages.

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER VIII

##### 1. Questions —

- (a) Make a list of medieval churches near your home, and find out the age of each.
- (b) What were the duties of the Friars and Canons? Why were they needed?

- (c) Explain the difference between Friars and Monks
- (d) What different sorts of Friars, Canons, and Monks were there?
- (e) What can you learn from such street and district names as the following?—Blackfriars, Whitefriars, Greyfriars (London), Grey Friar Gate, Friar Lane (Nottingham), Friar Gate (Derby), etc
- (f) Make a list of streets and districts, in any town you know, which are named after some medieval monastery or friary
- (g) Write an account of a day in your life as though you were a friar or a canon or a monk.
- (h) Draw diagrams to show the connection between (i) the Pope, Bishops, and Priests, (ii) The Catholic Church, Dioceses, and Parishes
- (i) What do you know about the following?—"Catholic", Christendom, Pope, Papacy, parish, diocese, Bishop, cathedral, abbey, abbot, prior, friar, canon, Carthusian, Charterhouse, Benedictines, Cistercians, chronicles, refectory, cloisters, garth, chapter, chapter house

## 2 Source Exercise :—

"Abbot Henry built the bell-tower, the *chapter house*, *cloister*, *lavatory*, *refectory*, and *dormitory*, also the *infirmary* with its chapel, a splendid, large palace, a wide gateway, with squared stones, a large brewhouse, and many *stables*. On May 25th, 1184, the whole of the monastery was burnt down. The beautiful buildings recently erected by Henry of Blois, and the Church, were reduced to a heap of ashes. The ruin of the relics and the loss of treasure (gold and silver, heavy cloth and silks, *books* and other ornaments) must grieve even those who only hear from afar about these disasters."

- (a) This was written in the Abbey of Glastonbury by Adam of Domesday, one of the monks. Explain how he would write this chronicle, and what it would look like
- (b) Find out as much as you can about Henry of Blois (the Abbot mentioned here, he was also Bishop of Winchester)
- (c) Write notes on the words in italics

## 3 Draw a plan of any medieval church or monastery

- 4 Draw pictures or make models of —A monastery (showing the church and cloisters), a monastic refectory, a chapter house, a dormitory, cloisters, a monk, a friar

## CHAPTER IX

### WARFARE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

**An Age of War and Chivalry.**—The Middle Ages can fairly be called the *Age of Feudalism*, and (as we have seen in Chapter V) the most important thing about feudalism was *military tenure*. Every landholder had to be ready to defend the lands which he held—in other words, he had to keep himself trained as a soldier. It was an age when even strong kings could not keep the country properly in order. Powerful barons attacked weak barons, and plundered or stole their lands, robbers abounded everywhere. There was no police force, and the king had no standing army of his own, except what was enough to defend his own court and lands. Consequently, landholders had to depend upon themselves, rather than upon the king, for protection.

It was therefore customary for all great landholders to be trained as *knights*—that is, horse-soldiers—who were able, when necessary, to lead small armies of their own followers, or to fight as *cavalry* in the army of the king. For this reason the Middle Ages are often known as the *Age of Chivalry*, from the French word *chevalerie*, meaning “horsemanship” or “knight-hood.” There were plenty of private wars between the barons, so that they were kept in practice, and even in times of peace they held those sham fights, called *jousts* or *tournaments*, for which the Middle Ages were so famous.

**Norman Kings and their Armies.**—Under the rule of the Norman kings (William I and his successors) England became rather more peaceful, and many men began to neglect to keep themselves properly trained and equipped. Henry II therefore made it compulsory (by a law called the *Assize of Arms*, in 1181) for every man to have as much armour and as many weapons as he could afford. And a hundred years later (in 1285, when, under his good rule, the people were again becoming slack about their own defence) Edward I did the same thing by his *Statute of Winchester*.

This statute is important, because it provided, not only for the upkeep of a proper army, but also for maintaining order in the country. That is, it was a *police* law as well as a *military* law, because in those days it was the ordinary people who did what is now done by policemen and soldiers. Thus the Statute of Winchester ordered that

“every man between 15 years of age and 60 years shall be assessed and sworn to armour, according to the quantity of their lands and goods, that is, from lands worth £15, and goods worth 40 marks, a hauberk, an iron helmet, a sword, a knife, and a horse”—

and so on down to the man with less than forty shillings yearly, who was to

“keep gisarmes [a sort of dart], knives, and other less weapons”

The police arrangements of the Statute of Winchester made the people themselves responsible for arresting suspected persons, and to prevent criminals from hiding or lying in ambush near the roads, it was ordered that all bushes were to be cleared away for 200 feet on each side. All town gates were to be shut from sunset till sunrise, and watchmen were to be appointed during the hours of darkness. Finally, if a criminal

escaped, he was to be followed from street to street, and from town to town, by the *hue and cry*—that is, by all the townsfolk who could possibly leave their work and pursue him.

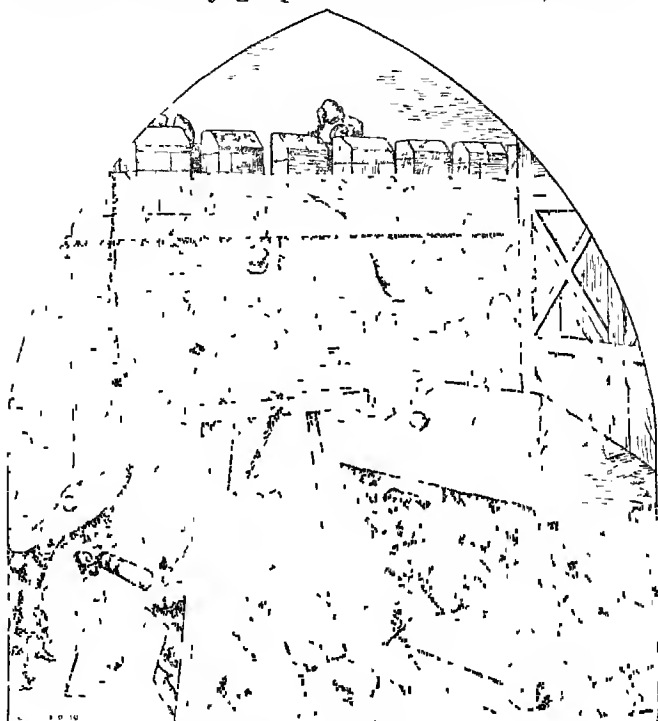
By 1285, however, the poorer people were not very important to the king as soldiers. Even in the twelfth century, kings had got into the way of using *mercenaries* (hired soldiers) for their armies, instead of their poorer subjects, who had no time to keep themselves in training. Henry II (1154-1189) had let it become customary for his tenants to pay him money, instead of joining his army with their followers. With this money (called *scutage*, or “shield-money”) he was able to hire soldiers who were much more use to him. These soldiers were fighting for wages and not to protect their own lands, and soon even knights, as well as foot soldiers, could be hired. At the battle of Crecy, in 1346, armed knights received a shilling a day, while mounted archers received sixpence, and unmounted archers threepence.

**Knights and their Armour.**—The armed knight received most pay, because his expenses were heaviest. He had to find food for himself and his horse as well as for the *squire* who looked after the horse and armour. And the armour itself was an expensive item. At first, under the Norman kings, it consisted of a heavy coat and leggings of *chain-mail*, made of iron links. Later, it became heavier and more expensive still, especially in the fifteenth century, when it was made almost entirely of metal plates, and was known as *plate-armour*. In the later Middle Ages the horses were armed as well, so that the cost of the whole of a knight's outfit was very great.

**Medieval Battles.**—This strengthening of armour in the later Middle Ages was due to changes in the methods



of fighting—chief of which was the introduction of gunpowder in the fourteenth century. Until the fourteenth century gunpowder was unknown, and the



MEDIEVAL SIEGE ENGINES

(Reduced from Longmans' "Historical Illustrations")

chief weapons used were the sword and axe of the heavy-armed knights, and the bows and arrows of the archers. In Norman times it was the knights in armour who did most of the fighting. The bowmen rarely did more than fire a few volleys at the beginning

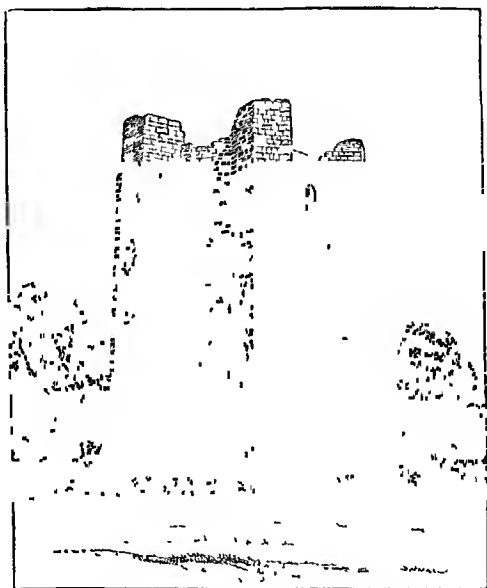
of a battle, and then retired, leaving the field to the knights. But in the fourteenth century English armies began to fight in a different way. The longbowmen were placed in between the different bodies of cavalry, and were kept there all through the fight. It was the steady fire of these longbowmen which did more than anything else to win the day for the English at Crecy (1346) and Poitiers (1356) in the Hundred Years' War.

The very title of the "Hundred Years' War" is enough to make us think. Wars do not take a hundred years to settle nowadays. Even if we regard this war, between England and France, as two or three wars lasting thirty or fifty years each, we still wonder why medieval wars were so long. The chief reason is that medieval generals knew more about defence than about attack, they found it easier to keep an enemy at bay than to drive him from any position he took up. Landlords had castles sprinkled about their lands, and until gunpowder was discovered castles were very hard indeed to take. The only artillery which could be used against them were *siege-engines*, which threw heavy stones, but were so slow that there was often time to patch up the castle wall again before much damage could be done.

**Castles and Sieges.**—Besides, medieval castles were built to stand long sieges. They were usually placed on a steep hill, which made it difficult for an enemy to attack. As a rule there was a well, which guaranteed the supply of water, and a medieval castle was big enough to contain food to last many months, even for a large number of people. At the approach of the enemy, sheep and cattle could be driven into the castle and kept in the courtyard until the enemy withdrew, or be slaughtered for food if the siege was a long one.

As the Middle Ages went on, castles were built more and more strongly. In the eleventh and twelfth

centuries most of them consisted of one or more courtyards on a hill, with a large tower, or *keep*, at the point which was easiest to defend. This keep was as strong as the builders could make it. Often the walls were 10 or 15 feet thick—so thick that some-

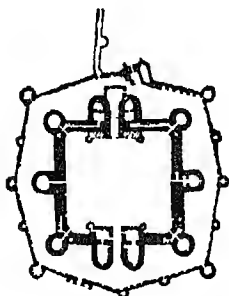


RUINS OF THE KEEP, CONISBORO' CASTLE  
(From Tout's "*A History of Great Britain*")

times there were rooms *in* the walls and not merely *between* them. As a rule, the only entrance to the keep was through a door on the second storey, which could only be reached by a ladder let down by the people inside.

The greatest change in castle building took place in the thirteenth century. For some time Crusaders

had been returning from the East with new ideas about fortification, and these ideas now began to be used in Europe. It was Edward I. who took most part in introducing them into this country, and the best examples of the new fashion are the castles he built to keep order in Wales. The chief change was that castles were built on a *concentric* plan—that is, there were two or three rings of walls, something like circles surrounding a single centre.

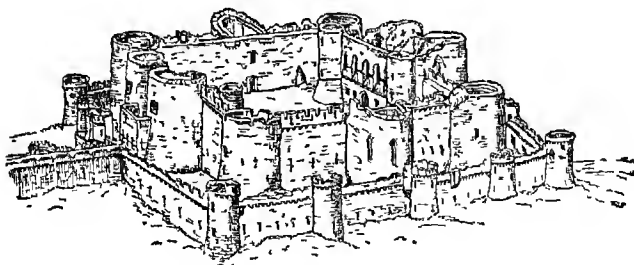


PLAN OF BEAUMARIS CASTLE  
Showing the arrangement of  
the concentric defences

(From Barnard's "*Companion  
to English History*," Clarendon  
Press, Oxford)

The plan of Beaumaris Castle, which Edward I. built in Anglesey, will explain the plan of the *concentric castle* better than words can do.

It is easy to see the advantages of this plan. When the enemy had taken one ring of wall he had to begin again with the next, and this time



VIEW OF BEAUMARIS CASTLE (BUILT BY EDWARD I.).  
Showing concentric defences

(From Barnard's "*Companion to English History*," Clarendon  
Press, Oxford)

he was fighting between two walls, in a space so narrow that it was difficult to escape from the missiles of the defenders.

**Gunpowder and the Decay of Castles.**—But even concentric castles could not resist gunpowder and cannon-balls. Towards the end of the Middle Ages, therefore, people realised that castles were no use any longer, since the new artillery could so easily knock them down. No more castles were built, and the nobles began to live in houses designed for comfort instead of in castles designed for defence (see Chapter XIII.)

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER IX

#### 1. Questions —

- (a) In what way were the people of the Middle Ages less civilised than ourselves, and what were the chief arrangements for keeping order among them ?
- (b) Write an account of an imaginary medieval tournament.
- (c) In what different ways did medieval kings obtain soldiers for their armies ?
- (d) How did fashions in medieval armour change, and why ?
- (e) What were the chief changes in *tactics* in the Middle Ages, and what effect did these changes have on the results of any medieval battles of which you know ?
- (f) Why did many medieval wars last so long ?
- (g) Write an imaginary account of a medieval siege as though you were taking part (i) in the attack, (ii) in the defence.
- (h) In what ways did castle building develop in the Middle Ages, and why ?
- (i) When was gunpowder first used in Europe, and what difference did it make to (i) battles and sieges, (ii) the castles and houses of the nobles ?
- (j) What do you know about the following ?—Knight, squire, military tenure, chivalry, Assize of Arms, Statute of Winchester, joust, huc and cry, mercenaries, scutage, chain-mail, plate-armour, keep, concentric castles.

## 2. Source Exercise :—

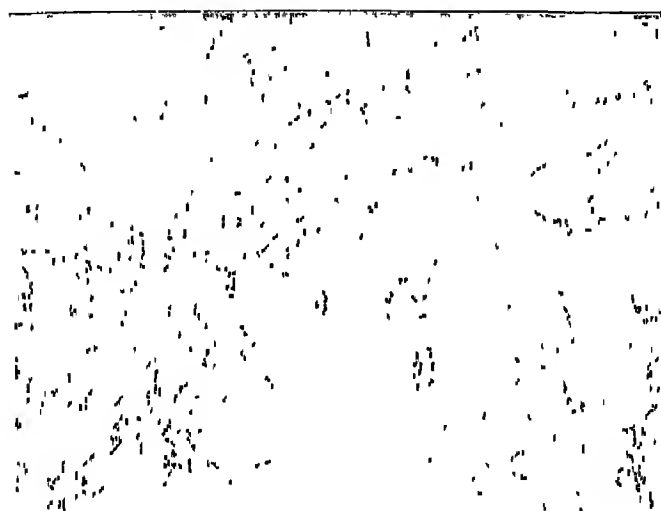
“ They that at the siege lay,  
 Ere it was passèd the fifth day,  
 Made them machines of sundry sort,  
 Which 'gainst the castle walls they brought.  
 Of mighty beams a sow they made,  
 On which a stalwart roof was laid,  
 With armed men enough therein  
 And instruments with which to mine  
 Sundry scaffolds they made withal,  
 That were much higher than the wall.  
 When this the townsfolk did espy,  
 A mighty crane they reared up high,  
 Running on wheels, that they might bring  
 It where was need of most helping  
 The engineer then bent in haste  
 His engine, and the stone fell fast,  
 And hit the sow with mighty orash,  
 And the main beam in twain did smash ”

- (a) This is from a long poem, written in the fourteenth century by John Barbour, about Robert Bruce. Find out as much as you can about both of them
  - (b) Write in your own words an account of the events described in this passage
  - (c) Draw pictures of the “ siege-engines ” mentioned in this passage, and find out their usual names
3. Draw plans of (a) any of the following battles —Hastings, Bannockburn, Crecy, Poitiers, Agincourt (mark differently the infantry and the cavalry), (b) any medieval castle (preferably one you have seen), say what kind of castle it is, and name the different parts of it
4. Draw pictures or make models of —
- (a) Medieval knights, showing the armour used at different periods
  - (b) Medieval archers
  - (c) Any medieval castle (i) from outside, (ii) from inside
  - (d) Medieval “ siege-engines,” giving the name and use of each.

## CHAPTER X

### TOWN LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

**The Town Streets.**—If we wish to realise what a medieval town looked like, we must forget a great



CHEAPSIDE (LONDON) ABOUT THE YEAR 1500

(For views of the same street in later times, see pages 133, 182, and 187.)

(By permission of "The Builder" from "Old London Illustrated")

deal of what we know about modern towns. In the first place, the buildings were very different. Except for the church, and perhaps one or two big houses and a market-hall, everything was built of wood and plaster

For this reason medieval buildings were not so strong as ours, and hardly any of them ever had more than two storeys. Most houses had the upper storey overhanging the lower one, and in some cases the streets were so narrow that people in bedrooms on opposite sides of the street could almost touch one another.

These narrow streets were one of the worst things about medieval towns. The houses were all so crowded together that the air was never as fresh as it ought to have been. Consequently, diseases spread very easily, and this was made worse by the way in which the streets were drained. There were no drains, as now, through which dirt could be washed into sewers underground. Instead, there was one single gutter in the middle of the roadway. In wet weather the rubbish was washed downhill—and it simply collected at the bottom till somebody removed it. In dry weather the rubbish stayed in the gutter, smelling and spreading diseases.

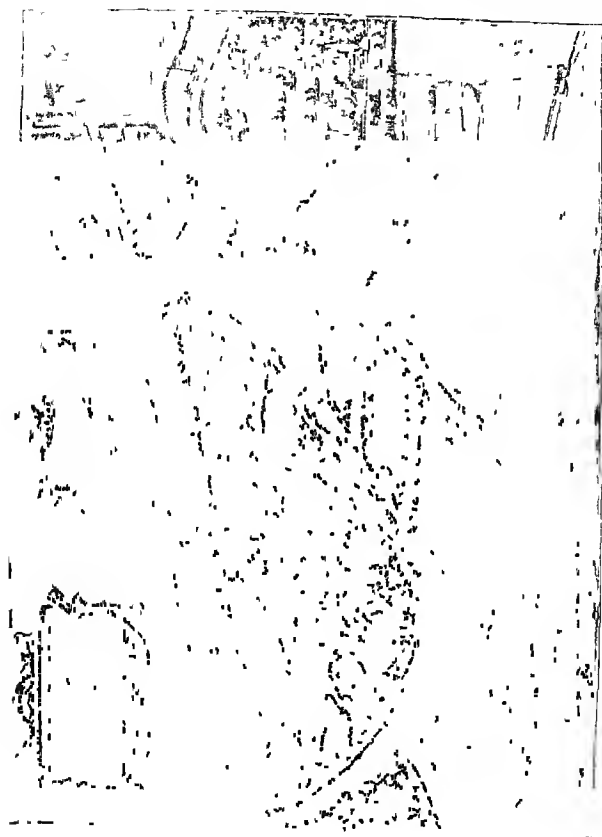
Since nearly all the buildings were of wood, there was another danger in medieval times—the danger of fire. Once started, a fire was very difficult to stop, especially as there were no fire engines—nothing better than buckets placed about the streets. Sometimes whole towns were wiped out by fire, and had to be completely rebuilt again afterwards.

Most towns were very small—no bigger than a large village nowadays. Often there was only one street, with a few alleys branching off it here and there. In the middle of the main street there was usually a market-place or a market-hall, to which the neighbouring villagers brought their spare produce.

**The Town Fields.**—And we must not forget that the town itself was in the country, as we should think—quite surrounded by fields. Many of the townsfolk



would be busy in these fields during the day, tilling the ground just like villagers, and coming back to the



A MEDIEVAL TOWN SHOWING WALLS AND FIELDS  
(From Braun and Hohenberg's "*Civitates Orbis Terrarum*")

town at night to sleep. In one town at least (Leicester) there were fields *inside* the town walls, and on them the townsmen had strips of their own and grew corn, just as in the villages.

**Shops and Workshops.**—In another way medieval towns were very different from the towns of to-day. There were no "factories" and no tall chimneys. In the Middle Ages a town was not so much a place where things were *manufactured* as a place where things were *sold*. They were sold in the market, but besides that, nearly every house had a shop in front of it, because nearly every townsman had something to sell.

Even the shops were different, because they were *workshops*. There were no shop windows—nothing but a sort of table with no glass in front of it, upon which the shopman showed his wares (much like a meat or fish shop nowadays). Customers had no need to go into the shop—they could just hand in their money at the shop front.

Inside the shops things were not being sold, but *made*. Nearly all the shopkeepers made the goods they sold. The shoemaker sold, at the front of his shop, the shoes he made inside, the hatter made the hats he had for sale, and so on. At the back of the shop was the living-room, as in many modern shops, and upstairs were the bedrooms.

Most of the shops, and even houses without shops, had a sign outside them like modern inns. Very few people could read in the Middle Ages, and so it was no use having a number on the door. Instead, signs were used which everybody could see and understand, and in those tiny towns, if you were sent to "the sign of the black dragon," there was not much chance of making a mistake.

**The Gilds.**—Now we come to a very important feature of all medieval towns. This was the *gilds*. Each trade had its own gild, which was a union of all the members of that trade in the town. There was a smiths' gild, a tailors' gild, a carpenters' gild, and so on, in every town. And in York (which was

one of the largest towns in medieval England) there were as many as sixty gilds

Only the masters were allowed to be gild members. In each shop there would usually be one or two apprentices and journeymen (as the ordinary workmen were called), as well as the master. The apprentice



INSIDE A MEDIEVAL SHOEMAKER'S SHOP  
(From Schopper's "*Panoplia*")

had to learn the trade for seven years before he could become a journeyman. During these years and afterwards, until he was married, he lived with his master in the house at the back. When he had been a journeyman for some years and had saved up enough money, he would become a master himself. Till then he was not allowed to join the gild.



*Photo Frith & Co Ltd*

OLD GILD HALL, MUCH WENLOCK.  
Showing Market underneath.

Each gild took care that all the members of that particular trade did their work properly. The weavers' gilds, for example, saw that cloth was well woven, and the proper length and breadth and quality. The gilds also settled the price at which things were to be sold, and no tradesman could sell his goods either cheaper or dearer than the fixed price. When a gildsman fell ill, his fellow-members gave him food and money until he was better, and if he died the gild looked after his widow and children.

**The Government of the Towns**—Naturally the wealthiest members of the gilds were often the most important men in the town. So in many cases these men became the rulers of the town—the *mayor* and *aldermen*, as they were called. When this happened the mayor and corporation would do the business of the town at the meeting-hall of the gild, and that is why in many old towns the chief building is still called the *Guildhall*.

The gilds were very careful whom they admitted to membership. Each gild called its own trade, or *craft*, a *mystery*, because the trade secrets were known only by those who were "masters" in that craft. It regulated the buying and selling of its own sort of goods all over the town, and if a merchant brought similar goods from another town to sell, he was called a "foreigner," and was not allowed to sell as freely as the gildsmen. Each "foreigner" was made to sell his goods to another tradesman, and was not permitted to sell *retail*, and so, perhaps, take trade from the merchants of the town where he was staying. In addition, he had to lodge with a gildsman, who promised to watch him and see that he kept the rules.

Very often this buying and selling was regulated by the *Merchant Gild*, whose members dealt in all

sorts of goods which the townsfolk might want. No town had more than one of these Merchant Gilds. Later in the Middle Ages, however, there were *Craft Gilds* for the separate crafts, and there was usually one for every important trade in the town.

**Town Markets.**—All these craftsmen and traders needed somewhere, besides their shops, where they could meet to exchange their goods. For this reason, the market was always one of the most important places in the town. Sometimes the market was just an open space, sometimes there was a covered-in market-hall.

In any case, there were always stalls, and usually they were arranged in rows, with all the stalls in each trade kept together. Thus there would be a bakers' row, a butchers' row, and so on. Many markets still have their stalls grouped together in trades, like this. But in the Middle Ages the town streets also were arranged in the same way, and in many towns the streets are still named after the trade which used to have most of its shops there. In London there is Bread Street, Milk Street, and the Poultry, in Edinburgh there is Candlemakers' Row. Nearly all old towns have at least one street still named in this way, after a medieval trade. Perhaps the commonest of all is *Cheapside*, which means "market-side," and is still, in many towns, the name of a street near the market.

On market days the town would be crowded with buyers and sellers from outside, as well as from the town itself. The townspeople took great care to prevent merchants from cheating, and there was a special court where goods were tested, to see whether they were all right in weight and quality. Any merchant who was found cheating was heavily fined. Goods were tested in this court as soon as the merchants reached the market, however hot and tired they were.

after their journey For this reason, it was called the *Court of Pie-powder*, or "Dusty-feet Court," from the French words *pieds poudrés*, meaning "dusty feet."

**Fairs.**—In some towns, however, the Pie-powder Court was not open on ordinary market days, but only once or twice a year, when the town had a special fair To these fairs merchants came from quite long distances, often with very expensive wares to sell. Nowadays, we think of a fair as a place where there are shows and roundabouts In the Middle Ages a fair was a serious business. People were there to buy and sell, rather than to enjoy themselves, though no doubt there were games and amusements as well Many towns are still famous for fairs which have been held every year since the Middle Ages One of the best known is Nottingham Goose Fair, which, in the Middle Ages, was really for selling geese, though there are no geese there nowadays Birmingham was noted for its onion and gingerbread fair, and the horse fair of Barnet is still one of the chief fairs in the country.

**Town Walls and Gates.**—Usually the fair was held outside the town walls, and there was a holiday inside the town itself, and all the shops were closed We must not forget that in those days, when fighting was much more common than it is now, all big towns were surrounded by a wall In many old towns (such as York and Chester) these walls still exist They were there to keep enemies from entering the town and stealing from the shops and houses, and for that reason the town gates were always closed from nightfall until daybreak.

There was no way of entering a town except by one of these gates We can often tell, from modern names, where these gates used to be, though sometimes "gate," in a modern name, only means "street." The seven gates

of medieval London are still remembered in the names of streets, like Aldgate, Moorgate, and Ludgate. In Nottingham there is a Carter Gate and a Fletcher Gate, and from these two names we can see, not only where the gates were, but where the cart-makers and the fletchers (or arrow-makers) had their workshops. Usually the gates themselves are gone from these streets which are still called after them, though at York, Chester, Winchester, and a number of other old towns the gateways, containing the house of the man who collected the tolls, still remain. But even where there are no gateways the names remind us that life in the Middle Ages—even in towns—was not nearly so safe as it is now.

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER X

#### I. Questions :—

- (a) What are the chief differences between medieval and modern towns?
- (b) Why were medieval towns unhealthy?
- (c) Write an account of an imaginary fire in your town in the Middle Ages.
- (d) Write an account of a day or week in your life as though you were a medieval apprentice.
- (e) What do you know about the Gilds?
- (f) What sort of houses, shops, etc., still have signs outside them?
- (g) What do you notice about all the following names? What do they mean? Write down as many others like them as you can think of (if possible, choose names of places near your home) —Cheapside, Eastcheap, Chepstow, Chipping.
- (h) Explain the meaning of the following names of streets (uncommon names have the names of their towns after them in brackets) —Eastgate, Westgate, Southgate, Norgate, Castle Gate, Churchgate, Kirkgate, Briggate (Leeds), Wheeler Gate, Bridlesmith Gate, Grey Friar Gate (Nottingham), Cowgate, Canongate (Edinburgh), Deansgate (Manchester, Bolton, etc.), Bishopsgate, Newgate (London), Gallowgate (Glasgow and Newcastle),



Gallowtree Gate (Leicester), Foregate (Chester and Worcester), Fargate (Sheffield)

- (\*) What do you know about the following?—Apprentices; journeymen, mayor, alderman, guildhall, mystery, pie-powder, craft

2. Source Exercise :—

"First, it is agreed and ordained that two *masters* of the *mystery* shall be elected each year, by all the masters of the *craft* in Bristol, and their names be presented to the *Mayor* of Bristol in the court of the *Guildhall*, there to swear on the Holy Gospels, within a fortnight of Michaelmas at the latest, to survey well and loyally all faults found in the said craft, whether they be committed by the masters or by the *journeymen* of the craft

"Also that no *apprentice* of the said mystery be henceforth accepted in Bristol to exercise the said mystery, until the masters shall bear witness before the Mayor that they are skilful and well taught in sewing and cutting, as they should be in this mystery." (*The Little Red Book of Bristol*, Vol. II, page 101)

- (a) What can we learn from this passage about (i) Gild meetings, (ii) the connection between the gilds and their towns, (iii) the way in which the gilds regulated their trade, (iv) the training of craftsmen?

- (b) Write notes on the words in italics.

3. Make a list of as many old schools as you can find, which are still called by the name of the gild to which they used to belong.
4. Draw a map of your town as it was, or might have been, in the Middle Ages
5. Draw pictures or make models of —A medieval street, medieval house-signs, a medieval shop, a guildhall, medieval townsfolk, illustrating the clothing of the period.

## CHAPTER XI

### TRAVEL AND TRADE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

**The Difficulty and Danger of Travelling.**—Most medieval people were *stay-at-homes*—they had good reason to be. In the Middle Ages there were very few things to tempt people to leave their homes. Travelling was difficult, not many roads were fit for carts, and, in any case, only the wealthiest people could afford to have carts. Most travelling was done on horseback, and very few were bold enough to ride out alone. The roads were infested with robbers and outlaws, who often worked in gangs, and so most travellers kept together in bands, to defend themselves better against attacks. It was the same at sea. Pirates were thick along every coast, and thickest of all, perhaps, in the narrow seas between England and France. Consequently, ships were as anxious to sail in fleets as land travellers were to journey in companies.

Besides this, there were very few who even wished to travel. The people of the Middle Ages were not very curious about distant places. Travellers' tales were as welcome then as now; but medieval folks cared little whether these tales were true or false. One of the most famous English travellers in those days was *Sir John Mandeville*, who wrote a book describing his journeys in the East. But we know now (though the men of Mandeville's day did not) that nearly all his book was copied from the accounts of

other travellers, and it seems probable that Sir John himself was never in the East at all

**Travellers' Tales.**—There is a good example, in "Mandeville's Travels," of the sort of thing people in the Middle Ages were willing to believe about foreign lands. Mandeville is trying to describe the cotton-plant, with its wool-like seeds, only he gets it so badly mixed that instead of saying that in the East "wool" grows on plants instead of on sheep, he says that

"there groweth a kind of fruit, and when they be ripe, men cut them in two, and find inside a little beast, in flesh, blood, and bone like a little lamb, without wool. And men eat both the fruit and the beast, and that is a great marvel. Of that fruit I have eaten"

People who would believe that sort of thing could not have known many travellers, and people, like Mandeville, who could write so untruthfully, must have known that there was hardly anyone who dare contradict them

Besides being uninterested in other countries and districts, medieval people knew that there was nothing to gain by changing their abode. Villages and villeins were much alike everywhere. Work was the same, duties were the same, wages and rents were the same. The lords of many manors were glad enough to travel, as we have seen, but even that was to get food, more than for the pleasure of travelling

**Merchants and Staples.**—Still, we have read in the last chapter of merchants and masters and fairs, and much of the merchandise had to be brought from elsewhere. Consequently, merchants were compelled to travel from town to town—whether they were *pack-men* with one horse loaded with their goods, or richer traders travelling with their own servants—or even

such merchant princes as *William Canynge* of Bistol, who owned about a dozen trading-ships of his own

As we have seen, these merchants preferred to keep together on their journeys, and for this reason they often made for the same towns, since it did not much matter where their goods were sold, so long as they sold them somewhere. Thus, towns which were conveniently situated on a river, or a good road, became important market-centres—or *staples*, as they were called, that is, “fixed” towns where people knew that goods could be bought or sold.

These *staple towns* were dotted all over Europe. Perhaps the biggest of all was Constantinople, where merchants from the East met the merchants of Europe, and where western and oriental goods were exchanged for one another. If we were to follow, let us say, a bale of Persian cloth in its journey to Europe, we should see it carried by camels across the desert to Palestine, and then either by land through Asia Minor, or by sea, to Constantinople. There it would be exchanged for western wares, which the camels might carry back again to Persia. Meanwhile, European merchants would carry the Persian cloth, probably up the Danube, through Vienna into the heart of Germany, and then down the Rhine towards the countries of the north.

One of the most northerly countries of all was England, and foreign goods took longer to reach here than almost anywhere else. The chief staple-town in northern Europe was *Bruges*, and it was through Bruges that eastern wares usually came to England.

But the Flemish merchants who brought them were not willing to take back their ships empty. In fact, they could hardly do so, since most trade in the Middle Ages was *barter* (that is, exchanging goods for one another), and money was not used nearly so much

as it is now There was one English commodity which the Flemish merchants were always willing to receive—the wool of English sheep, which was the best to be had in Europe

**The King's Customs and the English Staples.**—In the later Middle Ages the English wool trade became really important—so important, that the taxes (or *customs duties*) on it formed a large part of the revenue of the English kings Consequently, our kings always tried to make as much as they could out of these customs, though the merchants often tried to avoid paying them So certain towns were fixed as the only ones from which wool was to be exported, in order that the king might collect his customs more easily. Bristol, Norwich, York, Lincoln, Newcastle, and other towns, were made staples at different times But after the capture of Calais by Edward III, in the Hundred Years' War with France, that was chosen as the staple town, through which merchants had to take all the wool (the *staple commodity* of England) which they wished to sell abroad

At first, England could only export raw materials, such as tin, skins for making into leather, and, above all, wool. The merchants who dealt in these commodities were known as *Merchants of the Staple*, and they had a society of their own, governed by a Mayor, which regulated the trade of these exporting merchants, much as the guilds regulated the trade of the merchants at home Later, when England began to export cloth and other manufactures, this trade was carried on by the *Merchant Adventurers*, who also had a society of their own—and whose very name reminds us that all trade was risky in the Middle Ages

**Trade Routes.**—Most of the trading of the English merchants was done in the ports of Flanders, France,

and Spain. There was a ship's captain among Chaucer's pilgrims, and he knew all the ports

"From Gothland to the Cape of Finisterre",

but we are not told that he went much into the Mediterranean Sea. Yet in the Middle Ages the



MEDIEVAL PEDLARS

(From Schopper's "*Panoplia*")

Mediterranean really was what its name means—"the middle of the earth." It was the centre of the trade of Europe, filled with the merchant ships of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa in Italy, and of other ports further east, and England was only on the outer rim of European commerce.

**Pilgrims.**—Chaucer himself had travelled more than most men, and as he was a collector of customs for Edward III., he saw a good deal of the merchants and seamen who came to the Port of London. But Chaucer is most famous for teaching us that there were other travellers, in the Middle Ages, besides lords and merchants. The merchants travelled for business, many men travelled for religion. In many a company of travellers could be seen monks and abbots, messengers from the Pope—called *pardoneers* because they were selling what were supposed to be pardons for sins—and many others on Church business. These people were “clerks,” not only because they were “clerics” or churchmen, but because they could read and write in Latin—and Latin was a universal language which could be used in all European countries in the Middle Ages.

Most of the pilgrims in Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales,” however, were not clerics, but laymen, who were visiting the shrine of Saint Thomas at Canterbury, some for pleasure, some for the good of their souls. Pilgrims were common on all the roads of Europe, travelling in bands, like everybody else, and if many roads met at the staple towns, many others met at the shrines of famous saints—at Canterbury in England, at Cologne in Germany, at the shrine of Saint James at Santiago in Spain, and, above all, at Rome, the headquarters of the Catholic Church. “All roads,” said a favourite medieval proverb, “lead to Rome.”

**The Crusades.**—As the Middle Ages wore on travelling became more common, and so people came to know more of the outside world. The Crusades (which were really great armed pilgrimages to Palestine) had brought new ideas into Europe—about building and trade and furniture and clothes, and even the figures

we use were copied by Crusaders from the Arabs. Other pilgrimages, and the dealings of English with foreign merchants, spread about other ideas still, and by the end of the fourteenth century people were much more interested in foreign countries and new ideas than they had ever been before. This new interest in things began a great change, which brought the Middle Ages to an end, and about which we shall read in a later chapter.

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XI

1. Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write short notes on them —Sir John Mandeville, William Canynge of Bristol, Chaucer
2. Questions :—
  - (a) Why did people travel so little in the Middle Ages ?
  - (b) Write an account of a medieval journey as though you were (i) a wealthy merchant, (ii) a packman, (iii) a pardoner, (iv) a pilgrim.
  - (c) What was the use of staples ? In what places were they most likely to be fixed ?
  - (d) What were the chief staples in Europe ? Can you explain why each one became important ?
  - (e) What were the chief *exports* of England in the Middle Ages ? Where did they go to, and why ?
  - (f) What were the chief *imports* of England in the Middle Ages ? Where did they come from, and why ?
  - (g) Write an account of an imaginary day in the life of Chaucer.
  - (h) What were the chief trading companies in Medieval England ?
  - (i) In what ways was travel in the Middle Ages (1) harder than now, (ii) easier than now ?
  - (j) What were the chief places visited by pilgrims (1) in England ; (ii) on the continent of Europe ?
  - (k) What effects did the Crusades have on the daily lives of people in the Middle Ages ?
  - (l) What do you know about the following ?—Packmen, staple town, staple commodity, Merchants of the Staple ; Merchant Adventurers, bartei, customs-pardoners.



## 3 Source Exercises —

- (1) "A merchant was there, with a forked beard,  
 In motley coat, and high on horse he sat,  
 Upon his head a *Flemish* beaver hat  
 His boots were strongly clasped, and tidily.  
 His arguments he spake full solemnly,  
 Sounding always the increase of his winnings  
 He wished the sea left clear, above all things,  
 Betwixt the *Orwell* mouth and *Middleburg* "
- (2) "The morrow came, and forth this merchant rideth  
 To *Flanders*, his *apprentice* well him guideth,  
 Till he came into *Bruges* merrily "

These passages are from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the first is about an English merchant, the second refers to a French merchant who lived just outside Paris

- (a) What can you learn about the English merchant and his trade (1) from his clothes, (2) from the harbours mentioned?
- (b) What sort of goods would the English merchant buy and sell?
- (c) What do we learn from the first passage about medieval sea voyages?
- (d) What was the English merchant doing when Chaucer met him, and what was his purpose? Where else might Chaucer have met him?
- (e) Why was Chaucer particularly interested in merchants?
- (f) Mark on a map the route by which the French merchant would go to Bruges and back. Write an account of his journey.
- (g) Write notes on the words in italics.

## 4. Draw maps of —

- (a) England, showing the chief roads and market towns in the Middle Ages
- (b) London and Kent, showing the route followed by the Canterbury pilgrims, and the chief places through which they passed
- (c) Europe, showing the chief rivers, trading routes, staples, and shrines which attracted pilgrims

## 5 Draw pictures or make models of — A medieval merchant, pilgrim, pardoner, or any other traveller

## CHAPTER XII

### THE END OF THE MANORIAL SYSTEM AND THE RISE OF THE WOOLLEN INDUSTRY

#### I—THE END OF THE MANORIAL SYSTEM

**Decay of Feudalism**—We know that Feudalism and the Manorial System (which is really a part of Feudalism) came into existence in the Dark Ages, because there was no better way of arranging village life in those dangerous times (see Chapter IV) But by the fourteenth century the times were not nearly so dangerous. Kings could now keep their countries in fairly good order, so that even trade (which cannot prosper in unruly times) was beginning to flourish. And so there was less need than before for Feudalism and the Manorial System.

We have seen (in Chapter IX) how Military Tenure (the most important part of Feudalism) was altered by Henry II and his scutage. Scutage was a payment in money to the king, and it took the place of the former payment by service. The king's tenants were beginning to pay him money, instead of paying him by fighting. In the fourteenth century a similar change began to take place between the ordinary Lords of Manors and their tenants. Instead of paying for their lands by working for the lord, or by giving him part of their produce, some tenants were beginning to pay the lord money rents. This exchange of payment *in kind* for payment in money was called *commutation*, from a Latin word meaning "exchange."

**The Black Death and Its Results** —There is no telling how long it would have taken for this change to spread all over England, if it had not been hastened by a great disaster. This was the *Black Death*—a fearful plague which visited Europe from time to time, and which, in the years 1349 and 1350, killed about half the people of England. Naturally, it was the peasants who suffered most, because they could not escape the plague by going to another village, as the lords could who owned several manors apiece. Consequently, when the Black Death abated, the lords found themselves with far too few peasants to till their demesnes for them. Harvests rotted in the fields because there were not enough reapers, and the lords became very anxious to get fresh labourers to take the place of those who had died.

The labourers were only too glad to take advantage of this. Those who had already *commuted* their feudal services for a fixed sum of money, went on paying the money to their old lord, but very often they went to work for a new lord elsewhere, who would offer them high wages. Thus, as they were paying to their old lord the old rent, which was fairly low, and receiving high wages from their new lord, they were much better off than before.

This made the other labourers, who had not yet commuted their services, anxious to do so, in order that they, too, might go elsewhere and earn higher money. At first the lords tried to prevent this, and in 1349 a *Statute of Labourers* was passed, forbidding labourers to take, and lords to offer, wages any higher than was customary before the plague. But, of course, this law could not be properly carried out. The labourers were so anxious for higher wages, that they ran away to other lords, and the lords were so anxious for labourers, that they encouraged them by offering better pay.

Still, there were not enough labourers to go round, and many lords gradually found a better way of dealing with their lands. Instead of growing corn, they turned their lands into *pasture*, on which they reared sheep. As it takes far fewer men to look after a large sheep farm than to grow corn on the same amount of land, the lords could now manage with a much smaller number of labourers. Consequently, they stopped offering high wages, and before long the labourers were much worse off than they had been before. Many of them were unemployed, and even those who obtained employment as shepherds were very badly paid.

**The Peasants' Revolt, 1381.**—Things became so bad that the peasants of Kent rose in revolt, under the leadership of *Wat Tyler*. This *Peasants' Revolt* took place in 1381, because at that time King Richard II. had annoyed them by a *poll tax* of a shilling from every person in the kingdom, rich or poor, and, of course, this was much too hard on the poorer classes, who at that time could only earn about a shilling a week. But the revolt would have come sooner or later, anyway. The labourers demanded that there should be no more villeins, and that every man should be a free landowner instead, and that rents should be reduced to fourpence an acre. Richard II. promised them that their demands should be considered, but it was not really possible to do as the peasants wished, since the lords could not be forced to take low rents now, any more than the peasants could be forced to take low wages after the Black Death.

**Enclosures** —So hardship among the peasants continued, and it was made worse by the way in which the lords carried on their sheep-farming. Of course, sheep could not be kept in the old *open fields*, divided

as they were into acre strips which were scattered about anyhow. The fields had to be enclosed by fences and hedges, and so they had to be shared out on a new plan. Instead of strips scattered about the two or three fields, each landowner now began to have his land all in one piece, so that it could be fenced in for sheep. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries nearly half the arable land in England was fenced in by *enclosures* in this way—mostly in the counties around London.

When the lord merely enclosed his own demesne not much harm was done. But not many of the lords were quite fair, and they often enclosed some of their tenants' lands as well, so that the peasants no longer had land which would produce enough corn to keep them. This was made worse when the lord enclosed part of the waste land, which was really the common property of the villagers. When this was done the peasants had too little land for pasturing their own cattle, sheep, and pigs, or for cutting fuel and thatch for their cottages, and so they were worse off than ever. This is what a sixteenth-century poet meant when he wrote —

“Sheep have eat up our meadows and our downs,  
Our corn, our wood, whole villages, and towns.”

## II — THE RISE OF THE WOOLLEN INDUSTRY

This *enclosure movement* in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries caused great sufferings, and preachers, as well as poets and the peasants themselves, often complained about it. But at the same time another change was taking place, which made the hardship less than it might have been. This was the rise of the woollen manufacture in England.

**Fresh Employment for the Peasants.**—The peasants whose land was enclosed would have been starved if they had not been able to find another sort of employment. But in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries they found that they could make extra money by spinning or weaving wool, either in their spare time at home, or by going to live in the towns. Towns were growing at this time (especially in the south and east, where the enclosure movement was worst), because woollen cloth was now being made in England instead of abroad. In the early Middle Ages, England had obtained most of her woollens from Flanders, and Flanders had obtained raw wool from England. But in the fourteenth century English weavers began to make their own wool, and so employment was provided for the country people in the time of their greatest hardship.

We must not imagine, however, that weaving was done in factories or mills, as it is now. A few wealthy men tried to have factories of their own, and there was a certain John Winchcombe, of Newbury, in Gloucestershire ("Jack o' Newbury" he was called), who had over a hundred looms in one building. But a stop was put to this sort of thing by the *Weavers Act* in 1555, which forbade weavers to have more than two looms, and two apprentices, at once. Even in the towns the weavers would usually have only one loom, which they kept and worked in their own home. In the country cottages too, there would be just a single loom, or perhaps only a spinning wheel or two, and the peasants added to their earnings by weaving or spinning at home. It was in this way that the unmarried daughters of the house, who would do most of the spinning, came to be called *spinsters*.

**The Domestic System**—All these people would work for a *middleman*. The middleman bought the

raw wool from the sheep-farmers and took it to one man to be carded. When he had paid the carder he took it to a spinner, and then to a weaver, paying the men for the work, and then himself selling the cloth when it was finished. In this way all the work on the cloth was done in various homes, and this system of manufacture, which lasted in England until the eighteenth century, is always known as the *Domestic System*.

It was the Domestic System which eased the peasants of the hardships which threatened them at the end of the Middle Ages. Under the Manorial System they had eked out the livelihood they gained from their strips of land, by their extra rights of cutting turf, fuel, and building-wood, of pasturing their cattle and feeding their pigs in the woods, and so on. The end of the Manorial System took these extra rights from them, and many of them were threatened with starvation. But before long, these lost advantages were replaced by their earnings under the Domestic System of woollen manufacture. Besides, although much land was enclosed by lords in the south-east of England, enclosures were not nearly so common elsewhere. Even in 1600 more than half of the arable land of this country was still arranged in open fields, and it remained so until the eighteenth century (see Chapter XX).

Consequently, there was much less poverty at the end of the sixteenth century than there had been at the beginning. *Vagabonds* (or unemployed tramps) were less common, poor people were better looked after by their own parishes—especially after the passing of the great *Poor Law of 1601*, of which we shall read in a later chapter (pages 191-192). In fact, many people believe that in the seventeenth century the peasants and working classes generally were as well off as they have ever been.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XII

- 1 Make a time chart to illustrate the End of the Manorial System and the Rise of the Woollen Industry.

## 2 Questions :—

- (a) "There was less need than before for Feudalism and the Manorial System" (page 98) Explain why this is true
- (b) What signs were there, in the later Middle Ages, that money was becoming more common?
- (c) What were the chief results of the Black Death?
- (d) In what ways did the peasants gain, and in what ways did they lose, by the changes which took place in the fourteenth century?
- (e) For what reasons did sheep-farming become more common in the later Middle Ages?
- (f) Write an account of the Peasants' Revolt as though you were one of the peasants
- (g) What good, and what harm, was done by the Enclosure Movement?
- (h) What was the connection between the End of the Manorial System and the Rise of the Woollen Industry?
- (i) What do you know about (1) the Wool Trade, (ii) Woollen Manufacture, in the Middle Ages?
- (j) What do you know about the following?—Military tenure, scutage, payment in kind, commutation, Statute of Labourers, enclosures, poll tax, Wat Tyler, Jack o' Newbury, Weavers Act, spinsters, middlemen, Domestic System, vagabonds.

## 3 Source Exercise :—

"Because a great part of the people (especially workmen and servants) died lately in the plague, many of them, seeing the need of the masters and the great scarcity of servants, will not work without excessive wages, and others prefer to beg rather than work for their living, therefore, considering what grave inconvenience may come from the lack of labourers, we have ordained —

'That every man and woman of our realm of England, under the age of sixty, shall be bound to serve any master who offers suitable work, and to receive only the wages which were customary, in his district, in the twentieth year of our reign, or for five or six years before, provided that lords shall



have the choice, before others, of employing their own tenants—but not more than necessary. And if any man or woman refuse, he shall be taken to the nearest prison.

‘Also, if any reaper, mower, or other workman, runs away from his service without good reason, he shall be imprisoned.

‘Also, if any man shall pay, or promise to pay, any workman any more wages than used to be customary, he shall be fined double the amount.

‘Also, that Butchers, Fishmongers, Innkeepers, Brewers, Bakers, etc., shall sell their food at a reasonable price, taking moderate and not excessive profit, and if anyone sell food in any other way, he shall pay double the sum charged.’”  
(*Statutes of the Realm*, Vol I, pages 307-8)

- (a) From what law do you suppose this passage is taken? When was it passed, and why?
  - (b) Why was it “especially workmen and servants” who “died lately in the plague”?
  - (c) With what different sorts of people does this law deal, and what does it say about each of them?
  - (d) “Considering what grave inconvenience may come from the lack of labourers” What does the law mean by this?
  - (e) Why was “the twentieth year of our reign” chosen as a suitable date from which to reduce wages, etc? Whose reign was it, and what was the date of its “twentieth year”?
- 4 Draw maps of England, showing (a) districts in which most enclosures took place, (b) the chief woollen manufacturing districts (i) in 1500, (ii) now
  - 5 Make a plan of a real or imaginary medieval village (a) under the three-field system, (b) after enclosures had taken place.

## CHAPTER XIII

### BUILDING IN THE MIDDLE AGES

ONE of the best things we can do if we wish to understand the history of any people, is to study the sort of buildings they have liked to build from time to time. We have already learnt something of the buildings of the ancient Britons—they were content, as a rule, with very rough huts, which shows that they had little idea of comfort as we know it. We have seen, too, how the Romans improved building in this country, and from the way in which they covered the land with farms, houses, baths, and temples made of stone or brick, we can realise how highly civilised the Romans were.

**Saxon Buildings.**—We have learnt also (Chapter II) that civilisation decayed after the fall of the Roman Empire, and with the civilisation good building decayed too. The Anglo-Saxons were rougher altogether than the Romans—rougher even than the Britons had been under Roman rule—and consequently their buildings were far inferior to those of the Romans. Most of their houses were made of wood, which soon decays or catches fire, and so there are none of these Saxon houses left to show us exactly what they were like.

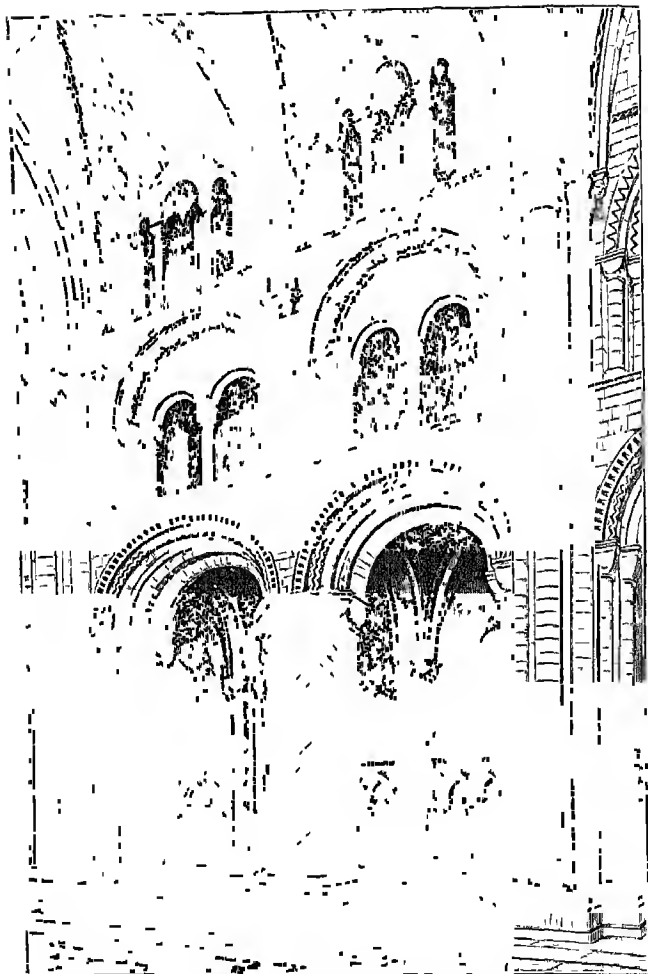
Some Saxon buildings, however, were made of stone, especially their most important churches. In the Middle Ages daily worship appeared more important to the people than ever before or since, and so they

paid more attention to their churches than to any other of their buildings. For that reason there are few towns or villages in the country to-day which do not contain at least one medieval church.

On page 22 there is a picture of the stone tower of Earl's Barton church, which was built in Saxon times. The first thing to notice about it is that it looks almost as though it might be made of wood, the projecting lines of stone have the appearance of a wooden framework. Even the little pillars between the windows at the top of the tower look like carved wood. The Saxons were so used to building in wood that even in their stone buildings they used decorations like these, which are more suitable for wood than for stone.

Another feature of Saxon building is the shape of their windows. They are always very narrow outside and much wider inside, so that from the inside of the building they seem like long, narrowing tunnels, the walls are so thick. Finally, Saxon windows and doorways are nearly always round-headed, except where the top of the opening consists of a single flat stone, which makes the window look square.

**Norman Buildings.**—When the Normans came to England in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and after the Norman Conquest, they introduced a much finer style of building, which was fashionable on the Continent. At first, Norman architecture was very much like that of the Saxons, except that by now (about 1000 A.D.) the builders were used to stone and knew how to avoid patterns which were more suitable for wood. Gradually the Normans improved their building methods, until they learned how to make quite wide arches of stone, so that their doors were wider and their windows let in more light. Besides this, they began to decorate their buildings in various



NORMAN ARCHITECTURE AT DURHAM CATHEDRAL.  
(From Gardiner's "A Student's History of England")

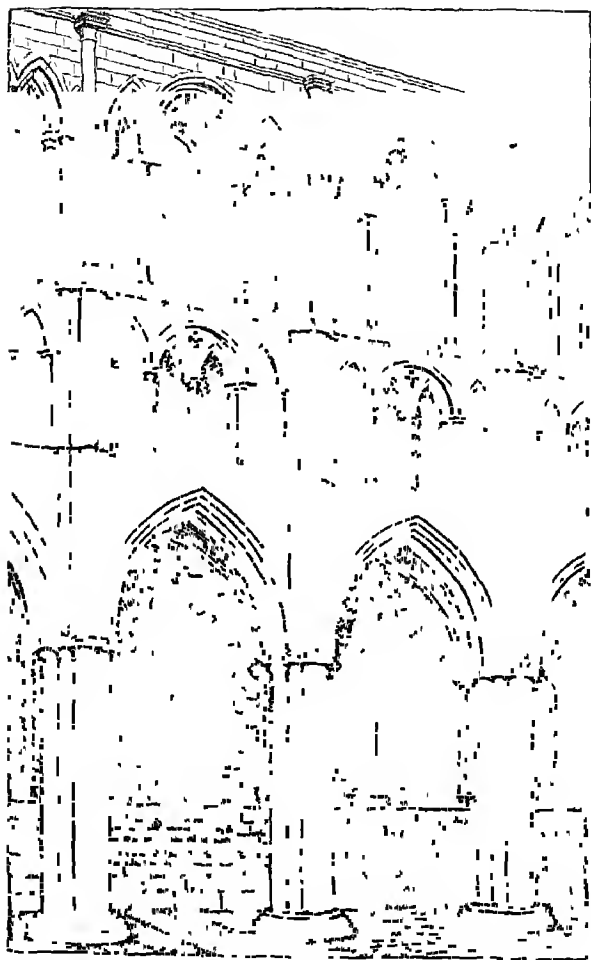
ways, which made them look much finer than any Saxon buildings had done

One of the finest Norman churches in England is Durham Cathedral, part of which is shown on page 108. Aches were still round-headed in Norman times but they were much wider, and the pillars between them were straight cylinders instead of being carved like wood. Moreover, the Normans knew how to improve the appearance of their building by grouping arches together in sets. In the middle storey (or *triforium*) in the illustration, two small arches have been set underneath one big one, and in the storey above (which is called the *clear-storey* because it lets in light) two small arches placed beside one big one make the whole window look much finer.

You will notice all over this picture (on the central pillar and round nearly all the arches) a peculiar zigzag pattern. This was the favourite ornament used by the Norman builders, and is one of the easiest marks by which to tell a building of the eleventh or twelfth centuries. Another sign of Norman work is the cushion-shaped tops of many of the pillars—*cushion-capitals*, as they are called.

**Gothic Architecture**—At the end of the twelfth century a very great change began to take place. Hitherto, all arches had been round, from now onwards, until the end of the Middle Ages, all arches were pointed, and this building with pointed arches is known as *Gothic* architecture.

The change came gradually, as we can see from the picture of Ripon Cathedral on page 110. In this part of the church the general pattern is much the same as at Durham, but in the clear-storey the little side arches are sharply pointed although the middle one is round, in the triforium, two pointed arches are set beneath a round one, and in the bottom



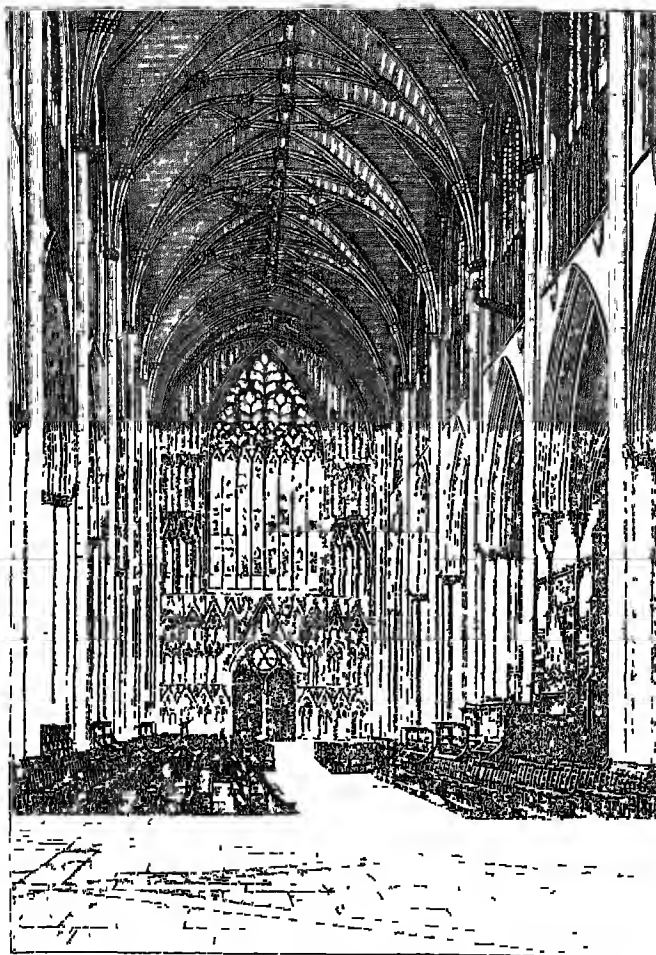
TRANSITIONAL ARCHITECTURE, RIPON CATHEDRAL  
(From Gardiner's "*A Student's History of England*")

row (or *arcade*) the arches are all pointed, although the windows behind them are round and *splayed* (or 'tapering') like the old Saxon windows,

**The Early English Style.**—Thus in this building we see a *transition* (or "passing") from one style to another. Consequently, this half-Norman, half-Gothic style is often called *transitional*. Before long, all arches were pointed, and this earliest style of Gothic architecture is called *Early English*. In pure Early English building the windows are long and sharply-pointed, so that they are called *lancets*. Besides this, the pillars are often divided into separate *shafts*, as at Ripon. The *capital* is bell-shaped, and sometimes around the bell there is very beautiful carving. Another sure mark of Early English work is what is called *trough-moulding* at the base of a pillar or a wall. If, round the base, the stone is carved into a little channel or trough which would hold water, it was almost certainly built in the Early English period (about 1170 to 1270).

Before long builders began arranging their windows as they had already arranged their triforium arches—that is, clustering two lancets together under another larger arch. At Durham (page 108) this leaves too much blank wall between the little arches and the big one, and at Ripon we can see that the builder has improved the appearance by carving a little opening in the bare space. In the doorway of York Minster (page 112) this design is carried a little further. There are still two arches under one big one, but the small opening has grown into a large circle of stone, with six openings in it, and each of these openings consists of three smaller circles arranged in a regular pattern.

**The Decorated Style.**—Ornamental doorways and windows like this are called *Decorated*, and *Geometrical*.



YORK MINSTER

Showing pillars and arches of the *Early English* period, doorway of the *Geometrical Decorated* and window of the *Flouring Decorated* periods

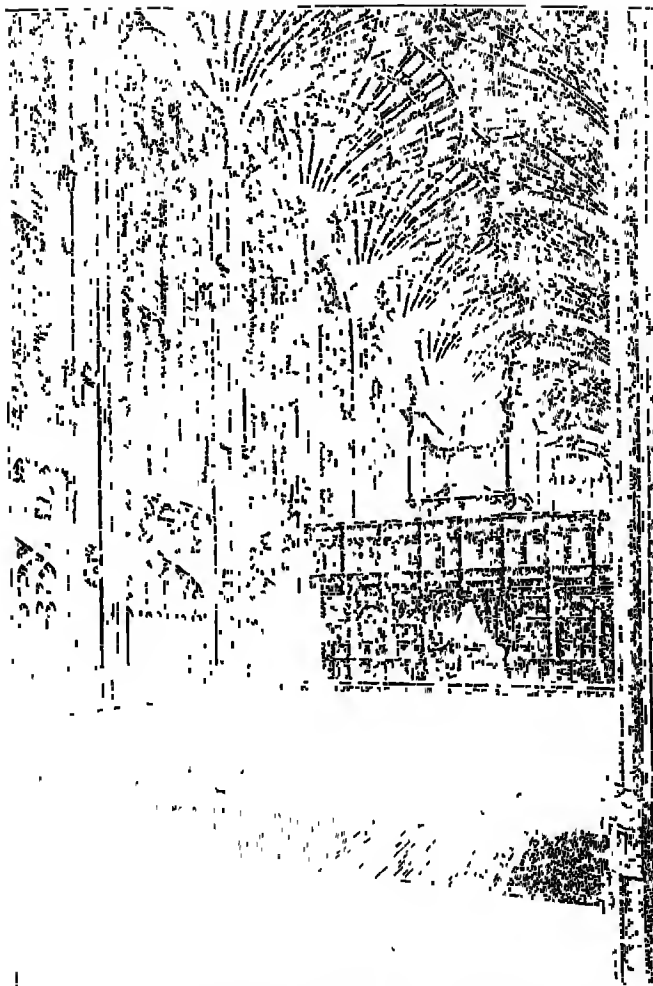
(From Gardiner's "*A Student's History of England*")



*Decorated* Gothic architecture (called "geometrical" because everything is carved into a circle or part of a circle) was fashionable in the second half of the thirteenth century. But it was not long before these circular patterns became more and more interwoven, until such beautiful windows as the large one at York could be built. This type is known as *Flowing Decorated*, because the lines of stone seem to flow in all directions. The fourteenth century was the great age of flowing decorated building, and churches of that period are usually full of delightful carving—not only in their windows, but on the pillars and seats as well.

**The Perpendicular Style.**—All this time windows were being made larger and larger, and so the churches were becoming lighter and lighter. Then again a change took place. Towards the end of the fourteenth century the decorated style went out of fashion and was replaced by the *Perpendicular* style. The picture of King's College Chapel at Cambridge (page 114) will explain why it was called perpendicular. Nearly all the lines of stone on the walls and in the windows of this building seem to be upright. Straight lines have taken the place of the beautiful curves of the flowing style, and these straight lines even reach to the tops of the windows.

This was the favourite style of the fifteenth century. At first it was much plainer and stiffer than the decorated style. Some people think that it came in because, after the Black Death, men thought they ought to be stricter, not only in their lives, but also in the way they built their churches. Others say that it was introduced simply because the plumbers were tired of fitting glass to the curved frames of decorated windows, and insisted that the builders should make their windows easier to fit.



PERPENDICULAR ARCHITECTURE (KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,  
CAMBRIDGE)

(From Gardner's "A Student's History of England.")

However plain the perpendicular style was at first, it soon became as beautiful as the earlier styles, and King's College Chapel is among the finest buildings in the country. It was not built until the reign of Henry VII (about the year 1500), and by that time Perpendicular architecture was fully developed. One of its chief beauties was *fan-vaulting* for its roofs, and the picture gives a splendid example of this, there are other famous specimens in Westminster Abbey, Peterborough Cathedral, and Saint George's Chapel in Windsor Castle. A fan-vaulted roof is a huge pattern of interlacing lines in stone, and the weight of it is carried down these lines to the side-shafts and so to the ground.

**Gothic Houses**—All our illustrations of Gothic architecture have, so far, been taken from churches, but other stone buildings were erected in the same way. On page 45 is a picture of an ordinary manor house built in Gothic and not unlike a church. But in the Middle Ages most buildings, except castles and churches (and even many of the latter), were of wood, or at best of *half-timber*, like that shown on page 84. In this style of building an oak framework was erected and then filled in with plaster or bricks—though bricks did not come into use until the fifteenth century. When a half-timbered building was finished, the oak framework was painted black and the rest white, so that it looked very pretty. But it was always liable to catch fire, and the timber and half-timber houses of medieval towns were often the cause of very disastrous fires.

**Country Houses in the Later Middle Ages.**—At first all great country houses, whether built like churches or not, were fortified like castles, with turrets for watching the enemy, a great hall something like a

keep, and a moat if there was enough water. Later in the Middle Ages, however, when there was less danger of private warfare, these houses were planned for comfort and beauty instead of for defence. The parts of Hampton Court Palace which were built by Cardinal Wolsey are a fine example of a great house of the sixteenth century, with its wide gateways and spacious courtyards and hall and chapel, and although there was a moat, it was probably more for beauty than for keeping out an enemy. It was in the sixteenth century, too, that country houses began always to have a *long gallery* upstairs, with a fine staircase leading up to it. Music was becoming very popular at this time, and these long galleries (which were really very big rooms) were used for musical performances and for dancing.

**Renaissance Architecture.**—This love of music was one of the results of the Renaissance, which taught men to enjoy life more, in all sorts of ways. The Renaissance had other effects, too, upon architecture. The revival of Greek learning was turning men's eyes also to the buildings of the ancient world. Building in the classical style of the Greeks and Romans came into fashion, and Gothic architecture was forgotten. Indeed, it was called *Gothic* by architects who thought that only men as uncivilised as Goths would build without imitating the style of ancient Greece and Rome. Hence most modern architecture is very unlike Gothic. We shall read later (Chapter XXVII) about building in modern times.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XIII

## 1. Questions :—

- (a) What sort of medieval buildings are most common to day, and why ?
  - (b) What are the chief "styles" of medieval architecture ?  
Make a list of them, and opposite each write down (i) the characteristics by which it is most easily distinguished from the other styles, (ii) dates showing the times when it was most common
  - (c) Write a short composition on "Windows in the Middle Ages"
  - (d) What is *Gothic* architecture, and why is it so called ?
  - (e) What changes in building took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and why ?
  - (f) Explain the meaning of each of the following —Triforium, clear-storey, zigzag pattern, capital, cushion capital, arcade, splay, lancet, shaft, trough-moulding, fan-vaulting, long gallery
2. Visit any medieval church or other building near your home, try to tell, by looking at it, how old each part of it is, then find out (from the vergers, the caretaker, or a book) how far you are right
3. Make pictures or models of —
- (a) Typical windows in all the "styles" of medieval building
  - (b) Any medieval building near your home.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES

MOST of us think of the Middle Ages as the time of knights in armour, tournaments, and castles. In this book we have learnt also that it was the time of villeins and bailiffs, monasteries and churches. By the fifteenth century all these things were rapidly ceasing to exist, except the churches. By the end of the sixteenth century even the Church was vastly altered from what it had been. The "Catholic" Church was no longer really "universal," and there were no tournaments, no villeins or bailiffs, and only the ruins of monasteries and castles.

**Rise of English Literature.**—That is what we mean by the end of the Middle Ages. We have seen already how warfare changed in the fourteenth century (Chapter IX.) and how the Manorial System came to an end (Chapter XII.) But there were other signs, besides these, that the Middle Ages were over, and that a new age, more like the ancient age of the Greeks and Romans, was coming in. One of the first of these signs was that people everywhere began to use their own language for writing as well as for talking. In the Middle Ages, the great age of the Roman Church, nearly all writing had been in Latin, the tongue of the Romans. But in the fourteenth century there was a great outburst of writing in the native languages of Europe. *Dante*, the greatest poet of Italy, and one of the greatest

poets of all time, wrote his greatest poems in Italian. *Chaucer*, the first great English poet, wrote the "Canterbury Tales" and most of his other poems in English. And from that time more and more literature was written in English, until about the year 1600 there came the great Elizabethan age of literature, when *Shakespeare*, *Spenser*, *Ben Jonson*, and many other famous men, were all at the same time writing fine works in English.

**The Reformation.**—One of the greatest books of that age was the Authorised Version of the English Bible, published in 1611. That, too, was another sign of the times. In the Middle Ages the Roman Church had believed that the Latin Bible was enough for everybody. But at the end of the Middle Ages men were beginning to think for themselves, instead of taking all their opinions from the priest. So there were translations of the Bible into German and French and English, as well as other languages. People began to study for themselves the Bible and the religious teachings of the Church, and many began to feel that they could belong to the Roman Church no longer. They protested against the authority of the Roman Church, and so they were called *Protestants*. In Germany, *Martin Luther* was their leader, in France, *John Calvin*, in Scotland, *John Knox*. In England there was no single Protestant leader, but Henry VIII. made himself Head of the English Church in 1534, instead of the Pope, in the years 1536 to 1539 he had all the monasteries destroyed, and when Elizabeth came to the throne (in 1558) she soon established the present Church of England. This series of reforms in religion is always known as the *Reformation*.

**The New Learning and Art.**—The Reformation had begun by the study of the New Testament in Greek,

the language in which it was originally written. Other famous books of the ancient Greeks were also studied—especially the works of the Greek scientists



SIXTEENTH-CENTURY BUILDINGS, HARROW SCHOOL

(From an old Print)

and philosophers. So it became important to learn the Greek language, and schools were set up all over Europe to teach it. In England these schools are usually known as *Grammar Schools*, and most



of them were founded in the sixteenth century. In the Middle Ages there had been seven subjects taught in most schools and universities: Grammar (the art of writing properly), Rhetoric (the art of making speeches), Logic (the art of reasoning), and Astronomy, Geometry, Arithmetic, and Music. In the Grammar Schools the chief subjects were Greek and



CAXTON AND HIS PRINTING PRESS

(From Longmans' "New Historical Readers," Book V.)

Latin, and in most of these schools little else was taught until the nineteenth century.

The *New Learning* (as this study of Greek and Latin was called) would not have been able to spread nearly so widely if it had not been for the invention of printing. Nobody knows who was its first inventor, but in the fifteenth century it became very popular in Germany, and in 1476 *William Caxton* set up the first

English printing press, at Westminster. In the Middle Ages, the only books were manuscripts which had been copied out by hand, and so they were very scarce. Printed books, however, soon became much commoner and cheaper than the old manuscripts, and so they made the New Learning easier to obtain.

The New Learning came into fashion because, as the Middle Ages were ending, people tried to become as much like the ancient Greeks and Romans as possible, and to do this they learned the languages of the Greeks and Romans and tried to think as they had done. They imitated them in other ways, too. Italian architecture and, later on, the architecture of the other countries in Europe, began to be built in the style of these Greeks and Romans of *classical* times, and so the new style of building is often known as *classical architecture* (see Chapter XXVII.) It is also sometimes called *Renaissance architecture*, because the whole of this vast change at the end of the Middle Ages was like a *rebirth* of Europe, and *Renaissance* is a French word for "rebirth."

Besides architecture, sculpture and painting and music were revived, as well as many other things which help to make life more enjoyable. The men of the Renaissance wanted to enjoy their lives much more than medieval people had done, and so they revived the beautiful *arts* of ancient times. *Michael Angelo* was perhaps the greatest of the Italian artists of the Renaissance, because he was architect, sculptor, and painter in one. Another of them was *Leonardo da Vinci*, whose picture, "The Last Supper," most of us know. But besides being a great painter he was a great scientist as well. He even tried to invent a flying machine—400 years ago!

**Geographical Discoveries.**—For he was, like many men at this time, fond of discovering things, and the

things they were most eager to discover were new ways about the world. The Middle Ages were a stay-at-home time, in modern times everybody travels a little, and many people travel much. In the fifteenth century Portuguese discoverers tried to find new routes to India, for in 1453 the Turks had captured Constantinople, the old meeting-place for traders to the East, and the old routes were no longer safe. Prince Henry of Portugal (the *Navigator*, as he is called) paid men to find a way round Africa. They failed at first, but they found out much about the west coast of Africa, and after Prince Henry's death, one Portuguese sailor (*Bartholomew Diaz*) reached the *Cape of Good Hope*. This was in 1486, and twelve years later another Portuguese, *Vasco da Gama*, sailed right round Africa to India.

Meanwhile, other nations set out on the path of discovery. In 1492 *Columbus*, thinking the eastern route to India would never be found, set sail to the west. He believed that the world was round, and that thus he would reach the eastern shores of India. Instead, as we know, he discovered America by accident, and it was not until 1521 that another Spanish expedition, led by *Magellan*, sailed to the south of America and so round the world. England soon began to join in the race for discovery. In 1497 *Cabot* sailed in English ships to *Newfoundland*. And in 1580 the first Englishman (*Sir Francis Drake*) returned from sailing round the world.

**Trade and Colonies.**—Most of us know Sir Francis Drake as the bold buccaneer who robbed the Spaniards of their trade. In fact, his voyage round the world, like most of the other voyages of discovery, was meant to find out new trade routes. Trade was becoming very important at the beginning of the Modern Age, and special companies were established to trade with

different parts of the world. In England the most famous of these was the *East India Company*, which was founded in 1600 to trade with the far East. There was also the *Turley Company*, and a *Muscovy Company* to trade with Moscow and the Russians.

Even the buccaneering voyages of men like Drake and Hawkins were meant chiefly for gain. Queen Elizabeth had shares in many of them and took part of the profits. In the same way, men like *Sir Walter Raleigh* tried to establish English colonies which would provide fresh trade for English merchants. Raleigh's new colony, *Virginia*, broke up soon after he founded it. But in 1607 it was founded again, and it was followed by others, including *Carolina*, which was named after Charles II., as *Virginia* had been named after Queen Elizabeth. In 1655 *Jamaica* was captured from the Spaniards, and in 1665 *New York* was captured from the Dutch. New England was founded (1620) by the *Pilgrim Fathers*, who wanted to live where they could worship as they wished. Eight or nine years later another company of Puritans settled in *Massachusetts*, and in 1633 *Maryland* was established for Catholics who could not worship freely in England.

**The Modern Age.**—Thus by the end of the seventeenth century, England had an empire and a great foreign trade, neither of which would have been possible in the Middle Ages. The Feudal System, with its manors and castles, had disappeared, there were new, Protestant churches, which the medieval Church had never known, and so many new lands had been discovered that the world seemed twice as big, and America was even known as the New World. The Middle Ages were at an end, and the Modern Age had begun.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XIV

1. Make a time chart to illustrate the various changes which took place at the end of the Middle Ages (divide the chart into separate columns for the different kinds of change)

- 2 Questions .—

- (a) How long did the Middle Ages last? Do you think this is a good name, and why?
- (b) What do we mean by the Renaissance?
- (c) What do you know about the Reformation? How was it connected with the Renaissance?
- (d) What were the chief differences between school lessons in the Middle Ages and in Modern Times?
- (e) Make a list of English schools founded in the sixteenth century, giving the date of the foundation of each.
- (f) In what ways was men's knowledge of the world increased between 1400 and 1600?
- (g) What signs were there, in the sixteenth century, that trade was becoming more important?
- (h) Write an account of the growth of the British Empire during the seventeenth century, illustrating your answer by a time chart.
- (i) For what different reasons were English colonies founded in the seventeenth century?
- (j) What do you know about the following?—Dante, Chaucer, Protestants, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Grammar Schools, the New Learning, Caxton, Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Prince Henry the Navigator, Bartholomew Diaz, Vasco da Gama, Columbus, Magellan, Cabot, East India Company, Muscovy Company, Raleigh, Virginia, Carolina, New York, New England, Pilgrim Fathers, Maryland.

3. Draw maps of —

- (a) The world, showing the chief geographical discoveries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Mark the routes of the chief explorers.
- (b) America, illustrating the growth of the British Empire in the seventeenth century.
- (c) Europe, shading the countries which became Protestant in the sixteenth century.

## CHAPTER XV

### COUNTRY LIFE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

DURING the last few chapters we have been reading of great changes which were taking place in the lives of the people. We shall be reading of other, and even greater, changes in nearly all the rest of this book. But during the seventeenth century there were no very great changes in the way the people lived. The way in which they were governed was altered very much indeed, but although those were very exciting times, most people went on with their lives as usual. And so we can pause here and see how the people of England did live in the seventeenth century.

**Results of the Enclosures.**—One of the greatest changes which had taken place in the century before was the enclosures, of which we read in Chapter XII. But by 1600 nearly all the enclosing had finished, because there was now being produced as much wool as the weavers wanted, and so farmers could not make any more money out of rearing sheep. Many of them started to grow corn again, and so the "vagrants" could get work in the cornfields, and there was not nearly so much unemployment.

But these men were not so well off now as they had been before the common lands had been enclosed, because they no longer owned any land of their own. They were just *labourers*, and instead of cultivating their own land for themselves they cultivated another

man's land for wages. The usual wages of these labourers was four shillings a week, without any food, but most of them lived in the house of the man who employed them—at any rate until they were married, and often afterwards—and then they received two shillings a week and had all their food for nothing.



HARVESTING IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

(From Gardiner's *"A Student's History of England"*)

**Food and Drink.**—This seems very little for a full-grown man to be earning, but we must remember that in the seventeenth century money was worth about ten times as much as it is now, so that the pay was not so bad after all. Still, these labourers were not so well off as a farm labourer nowadays. For one thing, their food was not nearly so good. Those who lived with their master had meals with him, but they

had to leave the table when the pudding came on and go without it

Besides, even the food they had was not so nice as now. There was hardly any white bread at all. Only the richest people could afford it. The rest (even the master farmers) had to have coarse brown bread made of rye—not nearly so nourishing as our brown bread nowadays. Then they could only have fresh meat in the summer and autumn. In those days farmers had not learned how to feed their cattle in the winter, and so they had to kill them in November, and from then until the next summer everybody had to eat salt meat.

They were just as badly off for drink as they were for food. Hardly anybody had ever heard of tea or coffee until the very end of the century, when both of these drinks became fashionable. But even then they were only fashionable in the towns and among the rich. Country people still had only three regular things to drink—water, milk, and beer, and they nearly always chose beer. It was quite a common thing for beer to be given to boys at school during their meals. For this reason brewing was always very important, and every wife had to know how to make good beer.

**Home Work.**—There were plenty of other things, too, which women had to do then, and which they do not have to do now. There were hardly any factories in those days, and very many things had to be made at home. Even the farmers who employed labourers were not above earning extra money by weaving cloth in their spare time, and most farmhouses contained a loom. It was the women of the house who had to prepare the *yarn* for these looms to weave, and as the mother was often too busy, most of this spinning was done by the unmarried daughters.

Still, all the spinning and weaving was only done



in spare time During most of the day the women were busy cooking and washing pots, milking cows and feeding the fowls, as they do on farms nowadays The farmer and his labourers would be busy working in the fields For we must not imagine that the farmer watched other people at work, without doing any himself. He would harness the horses and hold the plough as much as the labourers, indeed, he would do much of the hardest work himself, rather than trust others to do it

**The Yeomen.**—These farmers usually owned their own land, and they were often called *Yeomen*. The yeoman farmer did not rent hundreds of acres of land as a modern farmer does Most had about thirty or forty acres of their own This was quite a small farm, and very often indeed it was split up into small strips in the open fields, just as it had been in the Middle Ages, under the Manorial System A yeoman would be considered quite well off if he could make sixty or seventy pounds a year by his farm.

**The Squire.**—There was still a lord of the manor in most villages, only by now he was called the *Squire* Usually he had built a comfortable manor house, with a farm of its own, and he was much better off than the yeomen. And yet he was not very different from them During most of the year he would live in the same way, eating the same kind of food and enjoying the same kind of amusements Even his wife would have to work at baking and brewing and sewing Most women, even squire's wives, could not read at all, and the usual way in which they spent their spare time was in doing fancy needlework and sometimes learning music

The roads were still very bad indeed, and so very few people ever went far from their own village Sometimes the farmer went to the nearest market town

to buy or sell cattle or produce, but most farms just produced enough for their own people, and so it was not often necessary to go to market. Two or three times a year, the squire might have to go to the chief town of the county in which he lived, in order to attend the *Assizes*. Many of the squires were *Justices of the Peace* or *Magistrates*, and it was their duty to keep their own districts in order by punishing wrong-



A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY  
YEOMAN.



A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY  
COUNTRYWOMAN

(Taken from Speed's Map of the Kingdom of England, 1616.)

(From Gardner's "A Student's History of England")

doers, finding work for the unemployed, and so on. At the assizes all the magistrates met together to discuss the affairs of the county as well as to have criminals tried by one of the king's judges. Besides this, they met four times a year at the *Quarter Sessions*, for business which was not important enough for the assizes.

But most of the people in seventeenth-century England never saw a town at all. There were not many towns, and London was the only big one. But

as London and some other towns were very important, we must learn about them in a separate chapter.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XV

## 1. Questions —

- (a) "The way in which they were governed was altered very much indeed" (page 126) What does this refer to?
- (b) How were the following things different in the seventeenth century from what they are now?—(i) Wages, (ii) money, (iii) food and drink, (iv) farms
- (c) Imagine you are one of the following, in the seventeenth century, and write an account of a day in your life — (i) A yeoman, (ii) a labourer, (iii) a squire, (iv) the wife of one of these three
- (d) What do you know about the following?—Enclosures, vagabonds, common lands, Domestic System, spinsters, squire, magistrates

## 2 Source Exercise —

"He [Sir Roger de Coverley] would needs carry Will Wimble and myself with him to the country *assizes*, as we were upon the road, Will Wimble joined a couple of plain men who rode before us, and conversed with them for some time, during which my friend Sir Roger acquainted me with their characters

"'The first of them,' says he, 'that has a spaniel by his side, is a yeoman of about an hundred pounds a year. He knocks down a dunce with his gun twice or thrice a week, and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself. The other, that rides along with him, is Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for taking the law of everybody. There is not one in the town where he lives that he has not *sued* at a *quarter-sessions*.'"

(a) This passage is from an essay in *The Spectator*, written by Joseph Addison. Find out as much as you can about both

(b) What do we learn from this passage about the size of towns in the seventeenth century?

(c) How were all these men travelling? Why?

(d) To what class did Sir Roger belong?

(e) Was this yeoman poor or well off? Give reasons for your answer

(f) Write notes on the words in italics

- 3 Make pictures or models to illustrate the sort of clothes worn in the seventeenth century by (a) country gentlemen, (b) yeomen, (c) labourers

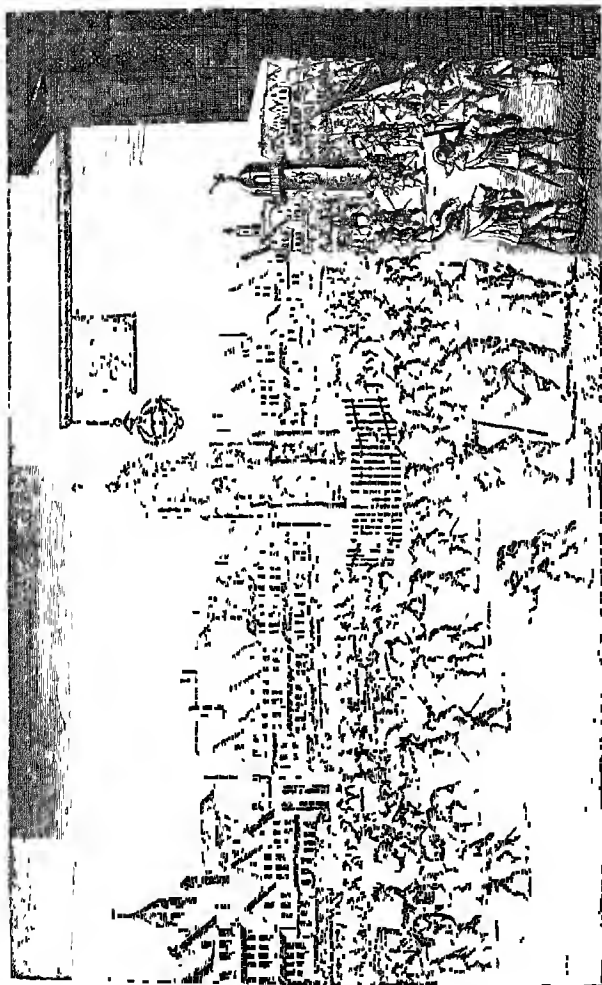
## CHAPTER XVI

### TOWN LIFE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

**Seventeenth-Century Streets.**—We have already seen (in Chapter X.) what medieval towns were like. In the seventeenth century they were not much different in appearance. There were still the same narrow streets, with their overhanging half-timbered houses and shops, and each of these had the same sort of signs as in the fourteenth century. The streets were still drained by a single gutter in the middle, and as there were now more carts than in the Middle Ages, people were always getting their clothes spoilt by the mud thrown up by cart wheels as they splashed through the gutter.

**The Plague and the Fire of London.**—In some towns the gutters were now cleared out occasionally. But even at Westminster, where the king lived and Parliament met, it was only while the plague was raging that they were cleared every day. And as other towns were less clean than this, outbreaks of plague were still very frequent. But it was in this century (in 1665) that the last great outbreak of the plague occurred in London, and it was one of the worst of all—though not nearly so bad as the Black Death of 1349.

Strangely enough, in the next year London suffered from an outbreak of the other great danger of those old, wooden towns. This was the Great Fire of 1666, and it destroyed most of the buildings and nearly all



CHEAPSIDE (LONDON) IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

(For views of the same street at other periods, see pages 79, 182, and 187.)

(From Besant's "History of London.")

the churches (though they were built of stone) in the City of London. Eighty-nine churches in all were burnt down, so it is easy to imagine the fearful destruction which this fire caused all over the city. One good result came from the fire. All London had to be rebuilt, and this time far more buildings were of stone, and so fire was not so dangerous in future. Besides, this gave a fine opportunity to one of England's greatest architects—*Sir Christopher Wren*. He rebuilt most of the churches, including St Paul's Cathedral; nearly all of them are still standing, and many of them are among the most beautiful buildings in the world.

But we must not imagine that other towns had so many churches as London. Most towns had still only one main street, and only the biggest towns (like Bristol, Norwich, York, Nottingham, and a few others) had more than one church. And very often that one church would hold nearly all the grown-up people in the town.

**Amusements.**—We must remember, too, that these towns had no such amusements as we know. London had several theatres, including the Globe Theatre, where Shakespeare's plays were acted in the early years of the seventeenth century. But most towns had no theatres at all, although in some of them there were *bear-rings* and *bull-rings*, where animals were worried (or *bated*) by packs of dogs which were set on to them.

Very few of the people could either read or write, and so they had to find their own amusements. In the summer it was easy to play games, but the winter months must have been very dull. There were no lights in the streets, and so there were always thieves about at night time. And as there were no policemen, it was always as well to keep indoors after dark. In 1685 London streets began to be lighted with oil lamps, one at every tenth house. But other towns

were still without street lights, and even London would have seemed very dark indeed to our ideas

In the summer outdoor games were common. Every town had some fields in it or near it, and so open-air dancing often took place, particularly at



THE GLOBE THEATRE (LONDON) IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY  
(From an old Print)

special seasons like May Day and Midsummer and at far times. Football and a sort of cricket were played, too, though the football was usually played in the streets, and as there were no goals, no pitch, and no teams—everybody kicking the ball anyhow, and in any direction, and keeping it to himself as long as he could—football was rather a scramble.

At the end of the century a new kind of place for

spending the evening became popular in London—but not anywhere else. This was the *Coffee-House*. Coffee was just becoming a fashionable drink (it came from Turkey, and its name is a Turkish word) and the coffee-houses were a sort of restaurant (or *café*, as we still call it) where men met at night to talk and pass the time in various ways, over their cups of the new drink.

**The Workpeople.**—Most of the houses were still shops—and *workshops*, too, as in the Middle Ages (see Chapter X). There were still masters, journeymen, and apprentices, but the guilds were no longer powerful in most towns. Instead of trade being regulated by the guilds in each town, it was now regulated by the Government of the whole country. In the year 1563 Parliament passed a famous *Statute of Apprentices*, which made some important rules for regulating the workpeople in the towns.

In the first place, this Act enforced the old rule that every apprentice must spend seven years in learning his trade. In some places apprentices had been taking less time than this, and consequently many of them never became good workmen. This law also tried to prevent agricultural labourers from running away to the towns and becoming apprentices there, and it was ordered that in some trades no boy should be allowed to be an apprentice unless his father was a yeoman, or at least as high in rank as that.

These parts of the Statute of Apprentices were meant to make sure that workmen should be trained properly in their trade. Another clause forbade masters to take too many apprentices. Some masters had tried to save money by keeping on their apprentices after they had served their seven years, or by having a large number of apprentices and no journeymen. This was not fair to the apprentices, who were pre-



vented from becoming journeymen at the proper time, nor was it fair to the journeymen who were thus kept out of employment

**Wages.**—Finally, the Statute of Apprentices ordered that wages should be settled, not by the guilds, as in the old days, but by the *Justices of the Peace* in the district. This was better than having wages settled by Parliament, because the magistrates knew what was fairest in their own neighbourhood much better than Parliament could.

Wages had risen since the fourteenth century—but so had prices, so that the workers were perhaps no better off. The proper wage for a weaver was a shilling a day, but many of them got much less than that. Masons received about eightpence or ninepence a day; and as both weavers and masons were specially skilled workmen, we can understand that unskilled workmen would earn much less than this

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XVI

- 1 Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write notes on them—The Plague, The Great Fire of London, Sir Christopher Wren, The Globe Theatre
- 2 Make a time chart showing as many dates as you can find between 1550 and 1700 about (a) English life and events, (b) events in your own town  
(Divide the chart into two columns, one for (a) and one for (b))
- 3 Questions—
  - (a) What were the results of the Great Fire of London?
  - (b) In what ways was London different from other English towns in the seventeenth century?
  - (c) Read Chapter X again. Which were the seventeenth-century towns more like—fourteenth-century towns or modern ones? What can you learn from this, when you remember that the seventeenth century was just as far from the fourteenth as it was from the twentieth century?

- (d) What do you know about games in the seventeenth century ?
- (e) What did the *Statute of Apprentices* say, and why was it important ?
- (f) What do you know about the following ?—Wages in the seventeenth century, bear-baiting, coffee-houses ; Justices of the Peace.

#### 4 Source Exercise :—

"The *justices of the peace* of every shire, and every *mayor* or other head officer within every city, shall yearly, at every general *sessions* holden after Easter, conferring together respecting the plenty or scarcity of the time, and other circumstances necessary to be considered, rate and appoint the wages of *artificers* and *labourers*, as they shall think meet, by the year or by the day, week, month, or otherwise, with meat and drink or without meat and drink

"Every person that shall have three *apprentices* in any of the said *crafts*, shall keep one *journeyman*, and for every apprentice above the number of three, one other journeyman" (*Statutes of the Realm*, Vol IV, Part I, page 414.)

- (a) Where are these passages taken from ?
  - (b) Who are to settle wages, and why ?
  - (c) "With meat and drink or without meat and drink". what can you learn from this about the life of seventeenth-century workmen ?
  - (d) Write notes on the words in italics
- 5 Draw pictures of a seventeenth-century street, house, or shop (if possible copy from some old picture of your own town) Compare this with your drawings of fourteenth-century buildings (Chapter X)
- 6 Make pictures or models to illustrate the dress worn in the seventeenth century by (a) nobles, (b) tradespeople.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

#### I—CLOTHMAKING

**The Woollen Industry and the Domestic System.**—We have learned already (Chapter XII) how a great industry arose in England in the later Middle Ages. This was the Woollen Industry, and by the end of the seventeenth century England was the chief wool-making country in the world. Formerly all the best wool had been made in Flanders, but there was so much fighting in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century that many of the weavers fled to England, and so the weaving industry passed to this country.

Except for this there had been no great change in clothmaking. Most of the weavers still worked at home, on looms which they owned themselves, making cloth from yarn which they bought, and selling the cloth when they had made it. This, as we have learned, was called the *Domestic System*, because everything was made at home and not in factories. But in the eighteenth century this system was gradually changed, until nearly everything came to be made in factories and so nowadays we have the *Factory System*.

This change in the system of industry is known as the *Industrial Revolution*. But whereas most revolutions happen suddenly, this one was very slow. There had been factories before the eighteenth century, especially in towns where much cloth was made;

but they were few and far between. Since the eighteenth century every town has become full of factories. The change was very gradual, but it was very great, and so there is good reason for calling it a "revolution."

**Machinery.**—All this was due to the invention of a number of machines which made weaving easier. First of all came the *Flying Shuttle*, which was invented by a man called *Kay* in 1733. Before this time weaving had been a very slow business. All the threads in one direction had had to be stretched out tight, while the weaver with his shuttle passed the other threads over and under them—much as a big hole is darned in a stocking—until a piece of cloth was made. Instead of this, *Kay* made a weaving-frame which held the first threads, one up and one down, like a sort of tunnel, so that a heavy shuttle containing the cross-thread could be thrown through the opening and made tight at the other end. By this means weavers were enabled to work ten times as fast as they had done previously.

But this, in a way, was awkward. You know already that the weavers' yarn was mostly spun in the farmhouses by the "spinsters." Even before *Kay* invented his flying shuttle the spinners had not been able to make yarn as fast as the weavers wanted it. After *Kay's* invention, of course, they were more behindhand than ever. So other inventors set to work to speed up spinning.

Thirty-two years passed before anything really useful was discovered. Then inventions came thick and fast. In 1765 *Hargreaves* invented his "*Spinning Jenny*," with which a single spinner could spin ten threads at once instead of one, with the help of a boy to turn the handle. Then spinning was made quicker still when *Arkwright*, who had already made an improved

spinning machine, discovered how to work it by means of a waterwheel instead of by hand

Twelve years later (in 1779) an invention by *Samuel Crompton* combined all the good points of Hargreaves' jenny and Arkwright's spinning machine, and made spinning even faster, since it was so simple that one man could mind several machines. Crompton's *mule* (as this machine was called) had another good point. It was the first machine which could spin a yarn which was thin and yet strong, and this made it possible to make cotton as well as woollen cloth. Till this time nearly all our cotton goods had come from India, and were called "calico" after the Indian town Calcut. But now that Crompton's mule had enabled English weavers to make cotton cloths, the English cotton industry began to develop rapidly until it covered the whole of South Lancashire, as it does to-day.

At first, Crompton's mule was worked by a horse. In 1785 *Cartwright* invented a weaving loom which was worked in a similar way, except that Cartwright used a bull instead of a horse. Four years later Cartwright had his looms worked by steam power instead, and before long the spinning machines were also being worked by steam. By the year 1815 there were 3,000 "power-looms" in England. Ten years later there were ten times as many, and in another ten years there were over 100,000.

**The Colouring of Cloth.**—Thus the woollen and cotton industries were beginning to spread rapidly, and the other "textile" industries soon developed in the same way. Everything depended on making all the processes as quick as possible, and in 1810 a new invention changed one of the slowest processes into one of the quickest. Hitherto all cloth had had to be bleached in the sunlight, and often this would take

as long as six months. But now *Tennant* discovered that bleaching could be done by chemicals such as *chlorine*, which not only made the cloth whiter, but, besides, took less than a week instead of six months to do it.

When the cloth was bleached it could be coloured into patterns, and long before *Tennant's* discovery this process, too, had been quickened. In the old days every pattern had had to be put on the cloth bit by bit, by means of stamps. But in 1785 *cylinder printing* was invented. By this, cloth was passed beneath an inked roller (much like a mangle) which was kept turning all the time, and so time was saved, and again clothmaking was made faster.

**Steam Power.**—By the early part of the nineteenth century nearly all these machines were being driven by steam, about which we shall read in the next chapter. But it is important to remember that steam engines are expensive, and can only be bought by men with plenty of money. Besides, weavers who still owned hand-loom could not work nearly so fast as the new power-loom. So gradually the hand-loom was given up, and their owners went to work instead for some wealthy man, who could afford to buy power-loom and the engine to drive them. And as the owner would naturally want all the looms to be driven by one engine, they had to be kept close together in the same building. In this way factories began to sprung up everywhere, and before long English industry was working under the *Factory System*, as it does to-day.

This factory system was fully established by the middle of the nineteenth century. Since then there have been other great inventions, and electricity is gradually taking the place of steam in driving the machines. But the factory system is still here, in spite of all these later inventions, and it came at first because

steam engines were invented And that brings us to another part of the Industrial Revolution.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XVII

1. Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write short notes about them.—John Kay, James Hargreaves, Sir Richard Arkwright, Samuel Crompton, The Rev Edmund Cartwright
2. Make a time chart showing as many dates as you can find about *Clothmaking in the Industrial Revolution* between 1700 and 1850

## 3 Questions :

- (a) What were the *Domestic System* and the *Factory System* ?
- (b) What do you know about the following ?—Power-loom; Spinning Jenny, Flying Shuttle, Crompton's Mule, spinsters, cylinder printing, calico.

## 4 Source Exercise :—

"The principal estates being gone from the family, my father resorted to the common but never-failing resource at that period, viz, the *loom* for men and the *cards and hand-wheel* for women and boys He married a *spinster*, and my mother taught me (while I was too young to weave) to earn my bread by carding and spinning cotton, winding linen or cotton *neft* for my father and elder brothers at the loom, until I became of sufficient age and strength for my father to put me into a loom

"Availing myself of the *improvements that came out while I was in my teens*, by the time I was married—with my little savings and a practical knowledge of every process from the cotton bag to the piece of cloth (such as carding by hand or by the *engine*, spinning by the hand-wheel or *jenny*, winding, *warping*, sizing, *loom*ing the web, and weaving, either by hand or *fly-shuttle*)—*I was ready to commence business for myself* In a few years I was well established and employed many hands (both in spinning and weaving) as a *master manufacturer*" (Radcliffe, *Origin of Power-Loom Weaving*)

- (a) About what time would this be written ? Give reasons for your answer
  - (b) Comment on the words and passages in italics
5. Make models or drawings of any of the inventions mentioned in this chapter

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

#### II.—THE AGE OF IRON AND STEAM

THE changes in the cloth industries, about which we have just been reading, were mostly brought about by men who invented machines. But although a hand-worked machine makes a great difference to the speed at which things can be manufactured, machines worked by engines make a much bigger difference still. One of the chief changes caused by the Industrial Revolution was that it led to steam being used for nearly all machinery, and that, of course, made the lives of the workers very different from what they had been.

**James Watt.**—This change, too, was the work of a few great inventors. Chief of them all was *James Watt*. He was not the first man to make a steam engine, but he was the first to make a steam engine which *paid*—and that made all the difference. Early in the eighteenth century, *Thomas Newcomen* had invented a “fire engine,” as it was called—because it was the first machine to have a fire connected with it. But Newcomen’s engine used up an enormous amount of coal, and did not do so very much work after all, and so not many manufacturers had found it worth while to use it.

But in 1764 somebody sent one of Newcomen’s engines to Watt to be repaired, and Watt, who was



a very skilful engineer, soon saw why it was so wasteful. Next year he invented a new "condenser" for use with Newcomen engines, and four years later he invented a steam engine of his own, which worked much better than Newcomen's and used up less coal.

Before long Watt's engines were being bought by manufacturers all over England, and in other countries as well. So he went into partnership with *Matthew Boulton*, a Birmingham engineer, and soon Boulton & Watt's works at Soho (near Birmingham) were turning out steam engines for all sorts of purposes—not only for driving factory machinery, but for pumping water out of mines and doing many other things for which machinery had never been used before.

**John Wilkinson**—Steam engines (like motors) depend very much on their cylinders, in which the pistons move as they turn the wheels. Now Boulton & Watt found that the cylinders they made were very faulty—the inside was uneven and so they leaked and wasted much steam. But a few miles away—at Bilston—was another engineer who could make quite sound cylinders. This man was named *Wilkinson*, and up till now his cylinders had mostly been sold to the Government for use as guns. But now Wilkinson began making cylinders for the Boulton & Watt engines, which were better than ever in consequence. The works of Boulton & Watt at Soho, and the works of Wilkinson at Bilston, were two of the first great engineering works in England. Before long other works began to be built near them and between them, and now the whole district between Bilston and Soho is covered with ironworks, and is known as the *Black Country*.

**The Black Country.**—Soon the Black Country became the most important place in the world for the manu-



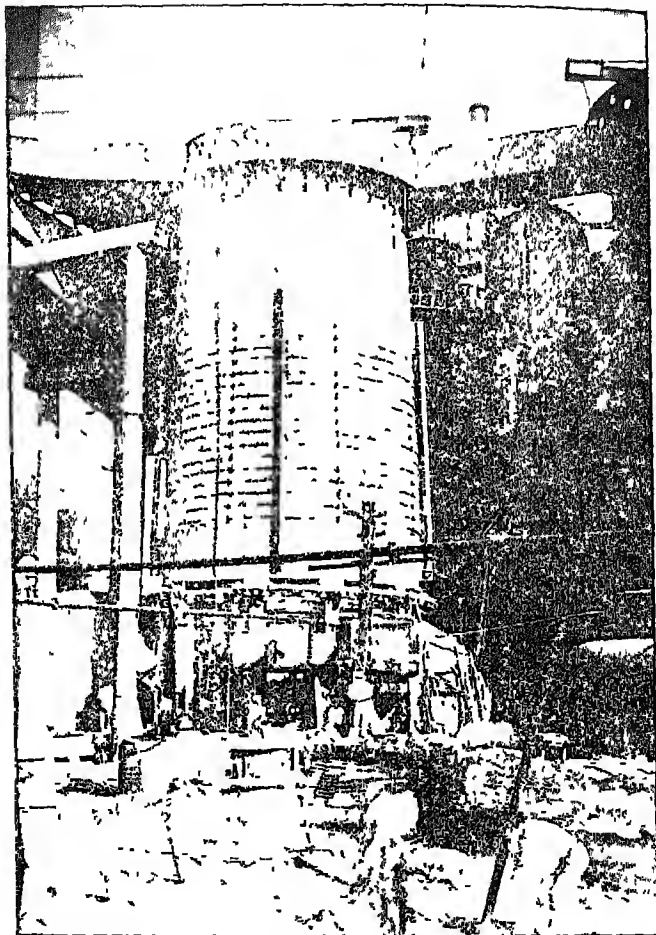
IRON-WORKING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.  
(From Ashton's "Iron and Steel in the Industrial Revolution.")

facture of iron goods. And there is a good reason for this. When machinery began to be made chiefly of iron instead of wood, and when it began to be driven by steam, two things were most important to every manufacturer. These were iron and coal—coal to help in making steam and also to help in making iron. And so English factories began to be built in those places where iron and coal are found together—in the Black Country, on the lower slopes of the Pennine Chain (where there is plenty of coal), and in Durham and South Wales.

**The Smelting of Iron.**—There had been iron and steel before the Industrial Revolution, but it was expensive to make, and therefore wood had been used for machinery as much as possible. Besides, until the eighteenth century, charcoal was used instead of coal for smelting iron, and so the iron had been smelted near the forests—especially in Kent and Sussex, because the forests there were near to London.

It was not till the middle of the eighteenth century that this slow and expensive way of smelting iron was changed. About 1760 several engineers (especially *James Smeaton*, at Carron in Scotland, and *Abraham Darby*, at Coalbrookdale in Shropshire) discovered how to make iron profitably by using coal instead of charcoal. It was fortunate that this happened just at that time, since iron was now needed more than ever, for the machines and steam engines which were just being invented.

Besides, iron was beginning to be used instead of wood, and even stone, for all kinds of purposes. In 1767 the first iron rails were laid down—in a mine at Coalbrookdale—and at the same place, in 1779, there was built across the River Severn the first iron bridge. Eleven years later Wilkinson of Bilston even built an iron ship, and although people laughed at him at the



IRON-WORKING TO-DAY.

A blast furnace at Bilston, Staffordshire

(By permission of Messrs Alfred Hickman, Bilston )

time, he was right after all in thinking that in the future iron ships would prove to be better than wooden ones. Soon after this English iron pipes were laid down for a new water system in Paris.

In fact, the age of iron had come, and iron was soon going to be wanted everywhere. Consequently, new ways had to be found for transporting iron rails, iron pipes, and iron machinery—as well as things not made of iron—from the places where they were made to the places where they were wanted. And, of course, even the ships and trains which did this transporting were soon made of iron too.

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XVIII

1. Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write short notes about them —Thomas Newcomen, James Watt, Matthew Boulton, John Wilkinson, James Smeaton, Abraham Darby
2. Make a time chart showing as many dates as you can find about *Iron and Steam in the Industrial Revolution* between 1700 and 1850

### 3 Questions —

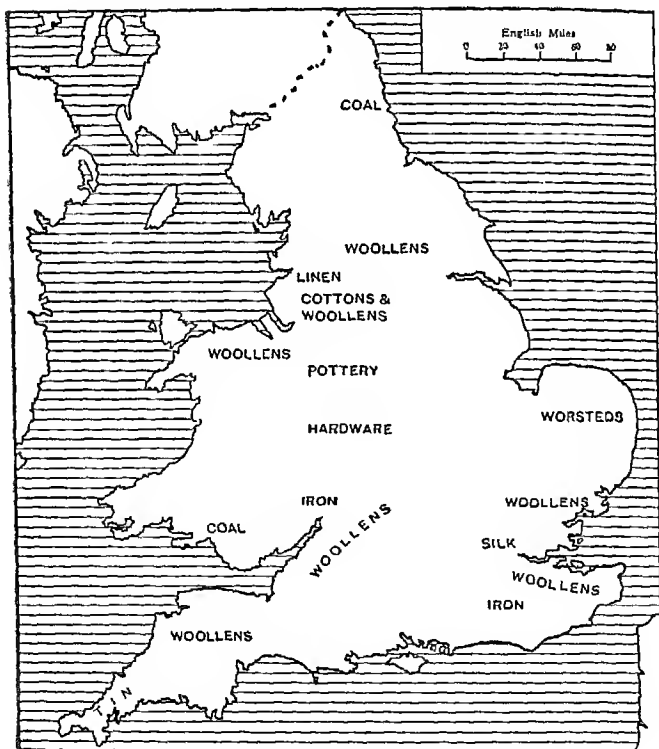
- (a) Why is Watt more famous than Newcomen?
- (b) How was iron smelted (1) before, (2) after the Industrial Revolution?
- (c) What things can you think of, which were not made of iron until the Industrial Revolution? What were they made of before?
- (d) Where were most of the ironworks (1) before, (2) after the Industrial Revolution? Why was this change?
- (e) What do you know about the following?—Black Country, Soho, Coalbrookdale, Carron, Bilston

### 4 Source Exercise :—

“We can only say that we have tried other *founders*; our experience hath caused us to prefer *Mr Wilkinson's* pumps at £18 per ton to any others we have seen at £14 per ton. But as to the outside *cylinder*, we do, with you, think £30 per ton

too much Yet although we have repeatedly battled that point with Mr Wilkinson, after all we have paid him at that rate for some small engines for ourselves" (Ashton, *Iron and Steel in the Industrial Revolution* By permission of the Manchester University Press)

- (a) What was the address from which this letter was written? Who would sign it? To whom would it be written?
- (b) Why were the writers willing to pay dear prices for "Mr Wilkinson's" pumps and cylinders?
- (c) Write notes on the words in *italics*



Emery Walker Ltd. sc.

CHIEF INDUSTRIES IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

#### III—TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

“NECESSITY is the mother of invention” It was because there had been a necessity for quicker ways of making cloth that Kay, Arkwright, and Crompton had invented their machines. It was because there had been a need for more iron that the newer and quicker and cheaper methods of smelting iron had been discovered And now there was need for better methods of transporting all the new manufactures from one place to another, and that led in its turn to inventions and discoveries which made transport and travel, like everything else, quicker and cheaper

**Roads before the Industrial Revolution.**—You know already what travel was like in the Middle Ages, and it was no better by the eighteenth century Nobody had bothered to make good roads since the Romans had left this country 1,400 years before, and the Roman roads, with their paved surfaces, were still better than many of the newer ones In some places the roads were too bad to use, except in good weather, and everywhere they had fallen into a disgraceful state It was not unusual for stone bridges to be worn right through, so that the water could be seen through the holes in the roadway, and one traveller actually measured ruts 4 feet deep on the road between Preston and Wigan in Lancashire.

Naturally enough, carts and coaches could only travel very slowly along these roads. Six miles an hour was a good rate for a fast coach—slower than a man can run. Most goods were taken, not in carts, but on horseback, and therefore only small loads could be carried. For example, when Manchester was becoming a great cotton town and more coal was wanted for the machines, the easiest way to get it was to have it brought in sacks, on *packhorses*, from the mines at Worsley, seven miles away. This took a long time, and cost a good deal in food for the horses and wages for the drivers, and by the time the coal got to Manchester its price was twice as much as it had been at Worsley.

**James Brindley.**—Here was a real necessity for invention, and the inventor came when he was wanted. He was a Derbyshire man, named *Brindley*, quite uneducated, but a very clever engineer. He solved this problem of transport by building canals, for carrying goods by water is many times cheaper than carrying them by road, and it was quite as quick as the roads in those days. Brindley began by building the *Bridgewater Canal* (it was the Duke of Bridgewater who owned the mines at Worsley and found the money for Brindley's work) from Worsley to Manchester in 1759, and before long the price of coal in Manchester went down from 12s. to 6s. a ton.

Other manufacturers, seeing how profitable canals could be, soon followed the Duke of Bridgewater's example. If coal was best carried by water because of its weight, water carriage was better still for pots, which so easily broke with jolting on the roads. This led *Josiah Wedgwood*, the greatest of all Staffordshire potters, to pay for a canal (also built by Brindley) which carried the Devon clay (for "china" pots) to the potteries, all the way from Liverpool, to which



it could be brought by sea. This was the famous *Grand Trunk Canal*, and it is still one of the chief canals in the country.

Before long the *Grand Trunk Canal* was joined up with the *Bridgewater Canal*, then it was joined up with the *River Trent*. And as canals soon began to be made at the rate of fifteen or twenty a year, the *Midlands* (which were furthest from the sea and which contained most of the factories and mines) became quite a network of them.

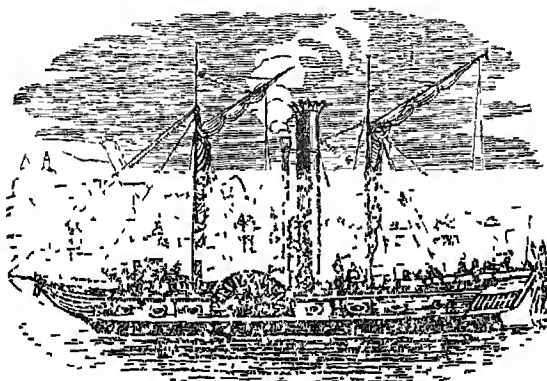
Meantime, other inventors were setting to work to improve the roads. First of all, the old roads were made better. Up till this time nobody had tried to make roads which would last. Stones were thrown down on the surface of roads when they were worn, and then left for heavy carts to break and stamp into the roadway as they passed along. Naturally, roads repaired in this way soon wore out again, and the ruts were as bad as ever.

**Macadam.**—It was *Macadam* who first discovered how to make for roads a surface which would last for a long time. His secret was never to use big stones. No stone, he said, ought to be too big to go into a man's mouth, and you will notice that roadmakers nowadays never use stones more than about 2 inches across, and that they always roll them well in, so that the road surface is quite even, and stays so. All our modern methods of making roads are based on this rule of *Macadam's*, and *macadamising* is still the regular name for certain kinds of roadmaking.

**Metcalf, the Blind Engineer.**—But it was not enough to have the old roads free from ruts. New roads were wanted because there was much more traffic, and they had to be planned to go in the best directions. The man who did most for planning new roads in the manufacturing districts among the hills

of Yorkshire and Lancashire was *Metcalf*, who was blind, but a very clever surveyor for all that. He always knew when it was best to make a road straight over a hill, and when to take the road round so that it should not be too steep. Between 1760 and 1780 new roads were being made at the rate of about thirty a year.

**Telford and His Bridges.**—New roads need new bridges, and the chief of the bridge-building engineers



EARLY STEAMBOAT

(From "*The Instructor*" of 1833)

was *Telford*. The first iron bridge at Coalbrookdale was soon followed by many others, and Telford himself built more than 1,200 bridges in his lifetime, including such famous ones as the Menai Bridge, between Wales and Anglesey, and the bridge across the river at Conway. Both of these are suspension bridges made of iron, and both of them have already lasted over a hundred years.

**Travel by Steam.**—New roads, new canals, new bridges—all these things made it easier and quicker to

move about from place to place. But in the early years of the nineteenth century travel became quicker still. By the year 1800 travel in the old ways was much easier, but still the old ways (on foot, on horseback, in carriages) were the only ones, as they had been for thousands of years. Then suddenly new ways of travel were invented, and before long even travel, like everything else, was being done by machines—and by machines driven by steam.

Watt had made steam engines which drove wheels, but the wheels and the engines and the machines always remained stationary. Then engines were fixed in ships to drive paddle-wheels at the sides. In 1813 a boat driven by steam (it was called the "*Comet*," and its inventor was *Henry Bell*) was sailing regularly on the Clyde, seven years later there was a steamship service between England and Ireland, and before many years had passed, steamships had begun to compete with sailing ships almost everywhere.

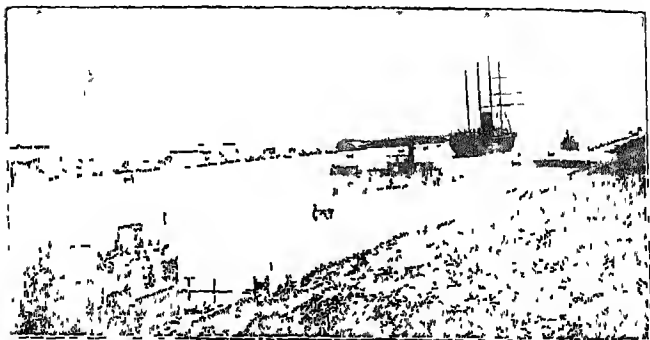
**Railways.**—At the same time steam transport was being made possible on land. The first steam locomotive was made to go along roads in 1803. But in the next year *Trevithick*, its inventor, decided that iron roads were better than stone ones for his iron engine, and so he built the first *rail-road*.

But railways could not become common until they could carry goods much more quickly than by road or canal, so as to make up for the extra cost. *George Stephenson* was the engineer who solved this problem, though he was building engines for fifteen years before his famous "*Rocket*" managed to go at the rate of twenty-nine miles an hour—much faster than anything had ever travelled before, for any long distance.

In 1825 the first passenger railway was opened, running between Stockton and Darlington, and five years later a still more important one was started,

between Liverpool and Manchester, two of the biggest new manufacturing towns. Since then England has been covered with railways. Trains which travel twice as fast as the "Rocket" are quite common, and in other directions travel and transport have become quicker still.

For a time, after the building of railways, the roads began to go out of use, but with the invention of motors all that has been changed again. The roads are now more crowded than they have ever been before.



THE SUEZ CANAL

(From Longmans' "Pictorial Geographical Reader Africa")

There are more railways. Most of the old canals are used as much as ever, and new canals have been built—some of them, like the *Suez* and the *Panama Canals*, running from ocean to ocean. And with aeroplane and airship traffic still increasing, nobody can say that this part of the Industrial Revolution is finished yet.

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XIX

- 1 Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write short notes about them—James Brindley, Josiah Wedgwood, John L. Macadam, Macadamising, Thomas Telford, John Metcalf, Henry Bell, George Stephenson, Richard Trevithick.

2. Make a time chart showing as many dates as you can find about *Travel and Transport in the Industrial Revolution* between 1750 and 1850
3. Questions :—
  - (a) How were goods usually carried before the Industrial Revolution ? Why was this ? Why was it unsatisfactory ?
  - (b) Why were so many canals built during the Industrial Revolution ? Why are most of them in the Midlands ?
  - (c) What was wrong with the roads before the Industrial Revolution ? How were they improved ?
  - (d) What were the chief differences between ways of travelling in 1750 and 1850 ?
  - (e) What do you know about the following ?—Bridgewater Canal, Grand Trunk Canal, Menai Bridge, the “ Comet ” ; the “ Rocket ”

4 Source Exercise :—

“ This *turnpike* is very bad I know not terms sufficiently impressive to describe this infernal road Let me most seriously caution all travellers to avoid it as they would the devil, for a thousand to one they may break their necks or their limbs by overthrows or breakings down They will here meet with *ruts which I actually measured four feet deep* and floating with mud—only after a wet summer, what therefore must it be after a winter ? *The only mending it receives is the tumbling in some loose stones*, which serve no other purpose but jolting a carriage in the most horrible manner These are not merely opinions, but facts, for I actually passed three carts broken down in these eighteen miles ” (Young, *A Farmer’s Tour*)

- (a) Where was this road ?
  - (b) Judging from the ruts, what sort of vehicles would you say used this road ?
  - (c) When would this be written ?
  - (d) This passage was written by Arthur Young, find out all you can about him
  - (e) Write notes on the passages in italics
- 5 Draw maps showing —
  - (a) The chief English canals (if you can, find out which ones were made before 1800, and colour them differently)
  - (b) The main railway lines (colour differently the lines constructed before 1850)
6. Find out about any bridges near your home, who built them and when
7. Make models or pictures of any famous modern bridges of older bridges which they replaced

## CHAPTER XX

### THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION

IN the last three chapters we have been reading about a great change (so great that it is always called a "revolution") which took place in manufacture and industry. At the same time quite as great a change was going on in the country villages, and as it altered all the methods of farming, and even made the villages themselves look quite different, this change is known as the *Agricultural Revolution*.

**New Ideas in Farming** — We have seen how, in the Middle Ages, and until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, each village kept pretty much to itself, and very few people ever went far from their homes. But the eighteenth century changed all that, with its new roads and canals and other improvements in transport. One result of this was that people got to know more of what was being done in other places. Consequently, when people in the north and west of England learned that farming was much more profitable in the south and east, they wanted to make their own farming profitable in the same way.

The chief reason why farming was paying better in the counties near London was that, in those counties, there had been more *enclosures* (about which we read in Chapter XII) than anywhere else. In the Midlands and the North, most of the villages still kept to the

*Three-field System*, and in many ways this was a disadvantage

**Disadvantages of the Three-field System.**—In the first place, the separate strips, with balks between them, were inconvenient for ploughing, because the plough had to be lifted over every balk. Besides, each man's strips were a long way apart, and much time was wasted in getting from one to another. Weed-seeds blew from the strips of careless farmers on to the strips of farmers who had weeded carefully, and so many men thought it was not worth their while to weed their strips properly.

This caused constant quarrels about the three fields, and it was just as bad in the pasture land beyond. One man, by being careless about his cattle, might cause all the cattle in the village to catch diseases and die. Clearly a change was needed. Yet who was to begin it? Good farmers were not going to take care of their allotments and their cattle when a careless farmer might ruin both, and so farming did not produce nearly as much corn and wool and meat as it might have done.

**A New Enclosure Movement.**—Just at this time more wool was wanted for the machines which had been invented, and more corn and meat were needed to feed the workers in the factories. Besides, the population of this country was growing rapidly, and so something had to be done. At first, some of the lords of the manors began to put fences and hedges around the pasture land and the waste, and even to turn the villagers out of their allotments in the three fields. Then they could farm the land as they liked, and make it more profitable by using new improvements which were coming in. But often the lord of the manor was unfair to the villagers, and did not pay

them enough for the land he was taking from them. So Acts were passed in Parliament to make this new *enclosure movement* lawful, though even then much injustice was done to the villagers

Still, commons and fields were enclosed and began to yield bigger harvests and fatter flocks and herds. For a long time Norfolk farmers had known that the best way to grow crops was to have in the first year wheat, in the second year turnips, then barley, then clover, and then back to wheat again, and so on. This was called the *four-year rotation*, and as the turnips and the clover put back into the earth much of the richness which the corn crops took from it, the crops were much finer in consequence. During the Agricultural Revolution, after the fields were enclosed, this Norfolk rotation was taken up almost everywhere, and the fields produced far more food than before

**Cattle Food.**—But besides helping to keep the soil rich, turnips and clover were useful in another way—for feeding cattle and sheep. Farmers began to pay more attention to breeding fat animals with plenty of meat, and this discovery about turnips and clover helped them a great deal. Till now, there had been very little food for the cattle in the winter, and so most of them had to be killed in the autumn and salted for meat for the next few months. The rest were fed very poorly, and so never had a chance to get fat.

Turnips made all the difference, they can easily be stored in the winter, and they make splendid food for cattle. And so cattle could be kept in the winter and fattened up again in the following year. Salted meat became less common, and, as too much salt meat causes scurvy, that was a good thing. But there were more important results.

**Cattle Breeding.**—For one thing, the cattle were so much bigger after the Agricultural Revolution



that there was more fresh meat than ever Between 1700 and 1800 the average weight of English bullocks went up from 370 to 800 lbs , and the average weight of English sheep went up from 28 to 80 lbs When you think that an ordinary Irish terrier weighs about 28 lbs , you can imagine what sheep looked like two hundred years ago, and what an improvement has been made by the Agricultural Revolution.



A MODERN PRIZE BULL  
(From Webb's "*Advanced Agriculture*")

**Difference between the New and the Old Enclosure Movements.**—None of these changes was possible until the fields and waste lands had been enclosed by men who wished to bring in better methods of farming We have already learned about the enclosures which took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the good and bad results which they had. In the next chapter we shall see the good and bad results of these new enclosures.

But you will have noticed one difference between

them. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the fields were enclosed for rearing sheep, because the new woollen industry wanted wool. In the eighteenth century wool was wanted again, for the new machines, but food was wanted still more for the factory workers, and their chief food was corn. So the fields which were enclosed during the Agricultural Revolution were mostly given up to corn growing, and not to grass. Even then English farmers could not produce enough corn for the English people. But things were better for a time—much better than if there had been no Agricultural Revolution.

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XX

- 1 Make a time chart showing as many dates as you can find about *The Agricultural Revolution* between 1700 and 1800

#### 2 Questions :—

- (a) Which part of England was best cultivated and more civilised before the Agricultural Revolution? Why was this?
- (b) Why was the Agricultural Revolution so long in starting?
- (c) What were the chief improvements in farming during the Agricultural Revolution?
- (d) What difference did the Agricultural Revolution make to people's food?
- (e) What do you know about the following?—Enclosures, four-year rotation, root crops, yeomen, Arthur Young?

#### 3. Source Exercises :—

(1) "WHEREAS it is found by long experience that common or open fields are great hindrances to a public good, and the honest improvement which every one might make of his own diligence and whereas all or most of the inconveniences which usually attend the open wastes and common fields have been fatally experienced at the village of ———, to the great discouragement of industry and good husbandry in the *Freeholders*. Be it therefore enacted that a true and exact

survey, plan, and valuation of all the lands to be divided and enclosed shall be made" (*Statutes*, 41 Geo III, 109)

- (a) What do you suppose this is a part of ?
- (b) Comment on the words in italics
- (c) What is meant by the "great hindrance to a public good," and "the honest improvement which every one might make" ?

(ii) "As for the sheep, they hadn't *such food as they have now* In winter there was little to eat, except what God Almighty sent for them, and when the snow was thick on the ground, they ate the *ling*, or died off. Sheep were not of much account then. I have known lambs sold at 1s 6d apiece" (*Toynbee, Industrial Revolution*)

- (a) What sort of person do you suppose said this, and when ?
- (b) Write a few lines explaining what this is about
- (c) Comment on the passages in italics

(iii) Write a short note on the following passage — "No fortune will be made in Norfolk by farming, unless a judicious course of crops be pursued. That which has been chiefly adopted by the Norfolk farmers is (1) turnips, (2) barley, (3) clover, (4) wheat" (*Young, A Farmer's Tour*)

4. Make a plan of any village you know, as you think it might have appeared before the Agricultural Revolution.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE RESULTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

THE Industrial Revolution changed the whole of British industry, the Agricultural Revolution changed the whole way of tilling the ground and rearing cattle. But the two together did more than this. They changed the way in which people lived, the places where they lived and the way in which they earned their livings. After these two revolutions England looked different, and Englishmen lived differently.

**Changes in the Country.**—We have already seen something of the change which came about in the country. Instead of three great fields to each village, and waste land and woodland beyond, there were now scores of fields, all surrounded by hedges or walls, and each field, instead of being shared out among all the villagers, belonged to one man. It is easy to see what a difference that has made to the appearance of our English villages.

The villagers lived differently, too. Before the Agricultural Revolution many of the villagers were landowners, with allotments of their own. But these small landowners, or yeomen, could not afford the new, expensive methods of farming which were coming in. So, if they were not driven from their allotments by an unfair lord of the manor, they often sold their land and became ordinary farm labourers instead.

That is one result of the Agricultural Revolution—most villagers nowadays are labourers, without any land of their own, instead of yeomen, farming for themselves. There are now a few big farms in each village instead of many little ones.

As we know, many of the yeomen had gained more money by having spinning wheels and cloth looms in their houses. But now they could no longer do this, as all the cloth was beginning to be made by machinery in the towns. So many of the yeomen left the country altogether and went to work in the towns at a factory, rather than stay as labourers in the village where they had once owned land.

**Changes in the Towns.**—And in the towns, too, everything was changing. Before the Industrial Revolution there had been no steam and no big machinery. That means that there were no tall chimneys in the towns and no factories—and no smoky shuns, where most of the factory workers had to live after the revolution, in order to be near their work. The new machinery made more things for people to buy and it made them cheaper than before. But as the workers had to live in ugly little houses in great ugly districts, the change had caused almost as much harm as good.

Nowadays, most towns are crowded with factories and mills where things are being made. In the old days a town was not so much a place where things were *made* (because under the Domestic System things were made in the country as well), as a place where things were *sold*. The market—not, as now, the factories—was the chief place in the town for making money. Naturally, the towns then were much less smoky and much less crowded with people than they are now.

For after the Industrial Revolution the towns were

really overcrowded. As we have learned, the machines were driven by steam and made of iron, and so the factories were crowded together in those parts of England where both coal and iron are found. And the workers had to crowd together in the same places. So nowadays the population is greatest around the coal and iron fields.

**Changes in Population.**—Strangely enough, the population now is thickest just in those places where, before the Industrial Revolution, it used to be thinnest. In the old days the people crowded around London, the capital of the kingdom and the greatest market town in the world. And in those days, too, when iron was made not with coal but with charcoal, most of the ironworkers lived near the woods of Kent and Sussex, where fuel was plentiful.

But now, except for London (which is still more crowded than anywhere else), most of the people live in the Midlands and the North of England. And Lancashire and Yorkshire, which in the old days were great rolling moorlands, peopled with a few shepherds and not much else, are now crowded with towns. In 1700 only about a quarter of the population lived north of the Trent, whereas now nearly a half live there.

Besides this, the towns themselves are much bigger. Two hundred years ago there were not 15,000 people in Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham put together. Now each one of those cities contains about 1,000,000 inhabitants. And whereas, in 1700, Bristol, which was the second largest town in England, had only 30,000 inhabitants, there are now nearly 100 towns bigger than that. And London itself has grown from a population of half a million to over seven millions.

This means that since the Industrial Revolution

most of the people of England have been living in towns. Only one person in three now lives in the country, whereas in the early eighteenth century only one person in four lived in a town.

This overcrowding was bad, but it could not be helped. Factories had to be near the coalfields, and the workers had to live near the factories. In the nineteenth century that led to terrible overcrowding in the towns, and the slums were very bad indeed. Slowly, however, this is being improved. Streets are being made wider, and even the poorest houses are usually built so as to look as pleasant as possible.

**Capitalists.**—There is one other result of the Industrial Revolution which is not so easy to remedy. We have already learned how, in the country, big farmers took the place of little ones, who became either farm labourers or workmen in the towns. In the towns, too, the same thing happened. In the old days most of the workmen had ended by becoming masters of their business and employing men themselves. But the Industrial Revolution changed all that. Only rich men could afford to buy machinery and run factories, and so the poorer people had to become employees of the great manufacturers. Perhaps that is the worst result of the Industrial Revolution. There were other bad results, but they are gradually being remedied. This result has not been remedied, most workmen nowadays are employees all their lives and can never hope to become masters, and it is only the masters (or *Capitalists*, as they are called) who can ever become really rich.

**Good and Bad in the Industrial Revolution.**—Still, the Industrial Revolution did much good as well as evil. If factories are ugly and dirty they make more things to share amongst all of us. Work is not so

comfortable as it used to be, but most people now can buy more things and have more enjoyments than their ancestors could before the Industrial Revolution. After all, if the growth of towns has stopped us from living in pleasant country, it has given us much in return—plenty of company, theatres, picture palaces, and other amusements, trams and buses to save us the trouble of walking, and altogether much more opportunity to make our lives more interesting and enjoyable, if only we will take that opportunity instead of neglecting it

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXI

1. Why were these movements called "Revolutions" ?
2. What difference did the Agricultural Revolution make to (a) scenery, (b) village life ?
3. What difference did the Industrial Revolution make to (a) the appearance of the towns, (b) life in the towns ?
4. Write compositions on (a) life in your town or village, (b) the appearance of your town or village, in the early eighteenth century.
5. Why do most people now (a) live in a town instead of the country, (b) work for somebody else ?
6. Draw a map of Great Britain, showing by shading where most people lived (a) in 1750, (b) in 1850
7. Find out how many people there were in your town (and other towns near) (a) at the last census, (b) in 1801, (c) about 1700
8. Make a list of (a) the good points, (b) the bad points, of the Industrial and Agricultural Revolutions.



## CHAPTER XXII

### PROTECTION AND FREE TRADE

**Smugglers and Customs Duties.**—Most of us have read tales about smugglers. How many of us have ever noticed that there are smuggling stories about days long past, and smuggling stories about quite recent times, but very few about the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? We shall understand better why this is so when we have read the rest of this chapter.

In the old days nearly everything which was imported into this country was taxed—that is, the merchant who imported goods had to pay *customs duties* to the Government for being allowed to do so. When he had paid these duties the merchant could not afford to sell his goods as cheaply as he would have done. So prices in England were higher because of the customs duties, and what the smugglers did was to get goods into the country secretly without paying duties. Then they charged the same price as the merchants who had paid duty, and the smugglers got a bigger profit for themselves.

**Protection for Merchants.**—This made it necessary for the Government to employ a large number of Coastguards, who were always on the look-out to prevent smuggling. It was well worth the Government's while to do this, because of the money which was obtained from the taxes, and which helped to pay for the governing of the country. There was another

reason, besides, why customs duties were kept on. People used to believe that it was best for a country to sell as much as it could to foreigners, and to buy from foreigners as little as possible. Taxes on foreign goods made it harder to sell them in England. At the same time, such taxes *protected* English merchants and manufacturers who had the same goods to sell, because, not having any tax to pay, they could sell their goods cheaper than foreign merchants, and so get all the trade from them. For this reason, having customs duties on imports is called *Protection*.

**"The Wealth of Nations."**—But at the end of the eighteenth century, Protection was beginning to go out of fashion. In the year 1776 *Adam Smith*, a professor at Glasgow University, wrote a book called "*The Wealth of Nations*," in which he showed that countries might gain much by buying one another's goods. For instance, if Englishmen bought their wines from France, where good wine could be produced cheaply, and Frenchmen bought their clothes from England, where good cloth could be produced cheaply, both of them would be much better off. But if England tried to produce its own wines and France to produce its own cloth, both of them would get inferior stuff instead of the best.

For a long time not much notice was taken of Smith's teaching, because there were wars with France, and the Government had no time to think of anything but fighting. But when peace was made in 1815, great changes were soon introduced. From 1823 to 1827 the Minister in charge of the *Board of Trade* was *William Huskisson*, who lowered the customs duties which had to be paid on very many kinds of imports. Thus by 1827 there was far less Protection for English manufacturers. But there was also far less smuggling,

and it was soon found that foreign merchants, who now sold more of their goods in England because the taxes were low, spent their gains in buying English goods to take back with them. And so English traders and manufacturers actually gained, instead of losing, when the customs duties were lowered.

**Free Trade.**—For this reason the manufacturers came to believe that their trade would be better still if the customs duties were removed altogether—that is, if *Free Trade* were allowed by the Government. They therefore worried the Ministers to take off duty after duty, until there was Free Trade in every important merchandise except one. This was corn. The farmers and merchants who dealt in corn still received Protection long after most other customs duties had been removed, and Free Trade in corn was obtained only after a long and difficult struggle.

**The Corn Laws.**—The laws which gave Protection to the farmers, and to the landowners to whom the farmers paid rent, were known as the *Corn Laws*. These laws fixed such high duties on foreign corn that its price was far too great for anybody to pay. And as there was not enough English corn to go round, the English farmers, too, charged high prices for their corn. The landowners, thinking the farmers could afford it, charged them high rents for their farms. So that the people who gained most by the Corn Laws were the landowners, who were well off already, and the people who suffered most through the Corn Laws were the working classes, who could hardly ever afford to buy wheaten flour, and had to eat rye bread instead.

Yet it was very difficult to get Parliament to *repeal* (or “abolish”) the Corn Laws, because most of the Members of Parliament were landowners, who gained

so much from these laws. So some of the manufacturers decided to compel the Government to allow Free Trade in Corn, and in 1838 they founded a society called the *Anti-Corn-Law League*. The two chief men in the Anti-Corn-Law League were *Richard Cobden* and *John Bright*, both of whom owned large cotton factories in Lancashire. Under these men as its leaders the league published magazines and held meetings all over the country, until the people, and even Members of Parliament, were persuaded that the Corn Laws must be abolished.

**Peel and Free Trade**—The Prime Minister at this time was *Sir Robert Peel*, who was a landowner, like most other Members of Parliament. When he became Prime Minister (in 1841) he was determined not to repeal the Corn Laws. But when he saw that the poorest classes of the people had to pay such high prices, when their wages were so low, he changed his mind. First of all he took customs duties off many sorts of merchandise, and so made prices cheaper. Then, after he had been Prime Minister for five years, he decided that bread, too, ought to be made cheaper, especially as a famine in Ireland at this time was causing great distress among the Irish peasants. So in 1846 the Corn Laws were repealed, and England became a really Free Trade country.

**Advantages and Disadvantages of Free Trade.**—It is easy to see the advantages which England obtained from this. Foreign goods were cheaper now that there was no tax to pay, and so the English merchants had to charge less too. Thus people found that their money went further than it had done before there was Free Trade. Besides, more foreigners now brought their goods to England to sell, and bought English goods in exchange. So that trade grew very

quickly indeed, and England was easily the greatest trading country in the world

But Free Trade caused disadvantages as well. It was now seen that English corn cost more to produce than corn from abroad, and the English farmers found that they were not making enough profit. So they took to sheep-rearing instead of growing corn, because sheep need fewer men to look after them than cornfields. More and more land in England became *pasture* instead of *arable* land, and more and more country people were thrown out of work and had to seek employment in the towns.

This had several bad results. In the first place, the people were not so healthy now that they were living in overcrowded towns, instead of in the open country. Besides this, there were no longer enough people in England *producing* food, and yet there were more than ever *needing* food. This was not so bad in peace time, because food could be imported from abroad, but in time of war, imports are stopped by the enemy, and the people are in danger of starvation because not enough food is being produced in this country.

During the nineteenth century English statesmen had come to hope that there would be no more great wars, and so they kept to Free Trade. Yet almost every other country still preferred Protection. Even before the war of 1914-19 *Joseph Chamberlain* tried to persuade the English to change back. But it took the war, and the terrible failure of trade which followed, to convince the country that Protection would pay it best. In 1932 taxes were put on most English imports again, to protect home manufacturers from foreign competition. However, duties on goods from British lands overseas are less than on foreign goods, and this *Imperial Preference* encourages trade between the various parts of the British Empire.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXII

- 1 Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write short notes on them —Adam Smith, The Board of Trade, Sir Robert Peel, Cobden, Bright, Joseph Chamberlain
- 2 Make a time chart to illustrate the history of *Free Trade* and *Protection* since 1750
- 3 Questions .—
  - (a) What connection is there between Free Trade and each of the following ?—Smuggling, prices, wages, farming, war
  - (b) Whom does Protection “protect,” and how ?
  - (c) In what ways does a country benefit by trading with other countries ?
  - (d) Which classes wanted Free Trade most, and which wanted it least, in the early part of the nineteenth century ?
  - (e) Who suffered most, and who gained most, from the Corn Laws, and how ?
  - (f) In what ways did England (1) gain, and (2) lose by becoming a Free Trade country ?
  - (g) What do you know about the following ?—Customs duties, “The Wealth of Nations”, Huskisson, the Corn Laws, the Anti-Corn-Law League

## 4 Source Exercise —

“WHITEHALL,  
“23rd July 1842

“*Sir Robert Peel*, with his humble duty to Your Majesty, begs leave to acquaint Your Majesty that last night was occupied in the House of Commons with another debate on the *Corn Laws*. This debate was entirely confined to those members who act with the *Anti-Corn-Law League*. It continued until twelve, when *Mr Cobden*, the Member for Stockport, moved an adjournment of the House” (*Queen Victoria's Letters* By permission of Mr John Murray)

- (a) Why was this letter to Queen Victoria written by Sir Robert Peel ?
- (b) When this letter was written, how long had the Anti Corn-Law League been working ?
- (c) Write notes on the names in italics

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE REFORM OF THE FACTORIES AND MINES

**Evils of the Factory System.**—We have seen, in Chapter XXI, how the changes which took place during the Industrial Revolution caused factories to be built all over England, and mines to be sunk to provide the factories with coal. Most of these factories were built in a hurry by manufacturers who wanted to make money quickly, and very often they were cramped, dirty, unhealthy places, nasty to work in, and often causing the workpeople to get diseases of various kinds. Often too, they were badly built, so that they collapsed under the weight of their machines, and injured the workmen. Hardly any of the machines were protected by a guard, and it was quite common for those in charge to be caught in the wheels and either injured or killed.

Besides this, it was customary to work very long hours. As we have seen, the factory owners wanted to make money, and so they tried to get as much work as possible out of their employees. It was not at all unusual for the men to be kept at work from six in the morning till ten o'clock at night—sixteen hours of work, often without a break, even for meals. This was bad enough anywhere, but in the cotton factories of Lancashire it was worse still. In many cotton mills the air has to be kept very warm and very damp, or the cotton is spoilt. This warm, damp atmosphere is very bad for the workers, and in the old days of sixteen

hours' work many of them caught fearful coughs, consumption, and rheumatism, so that before long they either died or became cripples

Worst of all, the women and children suffered from all this just as much as the men, who could stand it better. Their hours were just as long as the men's, they were kept in the same unhealthy rooms and the children especially were given the dulllest work to do, since they were not old enough to do the more difficult work. There were hardly any schools, so that the children were sent into the factories when they were very young. Six was quite a usual age for a boy or girl to be at work for twelve or sixteen hours a day, and in many cases the children were even younger.

**Laissez-Faire.**—Who was to remedy this state of things? Most of the factory owners were too keen on their profits to do so. Besides, most of the manufacturers believed that it was wrong to interfere, because prices would have to be raised if their employees worked less. "Let things alone," they said, "and prices will keep low. If we interfere, prices will go up, and the workpeople will be poorer than ever." This doctrine of "letting things alone" is called *laissez-faire* (which is French for "let it alone"). It was this idea which caused the manufacturers to resist improvements in their works—which was bad. But we must remember that this idea also caused them to 'let trade alone,' and to bring in Free Trade, which at that time was certainly good.

Even the workpeople themselves were afraid that any change might make them worse off. It was because they were poor that they allowed their children to go to work, they needed their children's earnings. This is what one Nottingham woman said, when she was asked about it —



"I have three children working in Wilson's mill: one eleven, one thirteen, and the other fourteen. They work regular hours there. We don't complain. If they go to drop the hours, I don't know what poor people will do. I suppose they'll take off the wages as well as the hours. I'd rather it continued as now. We have hard work to live, as it is. It would make sad work with us. My husband is of the same mind about it. He works in the mill, and I am winding. My husband earns 12s. a week, I earn 2s., the eldest child 4s. 6d., the second child 3s. 6d., the third child 2s. 6d. Total, £1 4s. 6d. Out of this we have to pay house rent, fire and clothes, and food for six of us."

**Lord Shaftesbury and the Factories.**—Since the manufacturers would not, and the workpeople could not, get matters improved, other people had to try to do so. One or two Acts were passed by Parliament, saying that women and children were to work shorter hours, but the factory owners disobeyed these Acts, and things were as bad as ever. Then Lord Ashley (who later became the *Earl of Shaftesbury*) decided to devote his life to improving the lives of the factory workers. It was through him that fresh Factory Acts were passed and had to be obeyed, and to him, more than to any other single man, the workers of England ought to be grateful for the better conditions in which they now work.

Shaftesbury worked so hard that before long he made the whole country interested in the hardships of the factory workers. A special inquiry was started, and factories and workers all over England were examined by the agents of the Government. It was to these agents that the Nottingham woman spoke the words which we have just read, and there was so much similar distress all over the country that the first really important *Factory Act* was passed in 1833. This Act said that no children under nine years of

age were to work in factories at all, children under thirteen were not to work more than forty-eight hours a week, all of them had to be passed by a doctor before they could be employed in a factory, and all of them were to go to school for at least two hours a week.

To us such regulations seem hard enough. But to the working children of those days they were a great improvement on what they were used to. Besides, this Act of 1833 appointed four inspectors to go amongst the factories and see that the Act was being obeyed. Four were not enough, of course, but before long the number of inspectors was increased, and this Act was obeyed much better than previous ones.

**The Mines.**—No sooner had Shaftesbury begun to improve the factories than he turned his attention to the mines, where things were just as bad. Another special inquiry was started, and it was found that women and children in the mines (just as in the factories) were having to do the worst parts of the work. It was they who had to pull the truck-loads of coal which the miners had hewn, and it was the children (some of them as young as four years of age) who were sent to cut coal from the lowest passages, which were too small for the men, and which were often even damper and more dangerous than the rest of the mine. Consequently, women and children alike became bent and crippled while they were still quite young. This was just the sort of thing that Shaftesbury was determined to improve, and in 1842 a *Mines Act* was passed, forbidding all women, and all children under ten years of age, to work underground.

The lot of the working classes was still far from perfect, but by 1842 it was much improved. Other improvements soon began to follow. In 1844 a *Factory Act* fixed twelve hours as the longest working day

for all women, and all young people under eighteen, and six and a half hours for children. At the same time it compelled all factory owners to guard their machinery to prevent accidents. Three years later another Factory Act reduced this working day to ten hours instead of twelve.

**Employers and Injured Workmen.**—All these Acts were for the protection of women and children—not of men. But shorter hours have been obtained for the men by their *Trade Unions*, about which we shall read in another chapter (Chapter XXVI), and other Acts of Parliament have benefited men, women, and children alike. The chief of these are the *Employers' Liability Act* of 1880, and the *Workmen's Compensation Act* of 1897, by which employers are made to pay compensation to employees who are injured while doing their work.

**National Insurance.**—Finally, in 1911, the *National Insurance Act* was passed, chiefly owing to Mr Lloyd George, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer. This Act compelled workpeople to save part of their earnings, to use when they were ill or out of work, and it compelled employers as well to pay money, which the Government gave to the workpeople, with their own savings, when they needed it.

Thus it took nearly a hundred years to remedy the worst faults caused by the Industrial Revolution. Factories were still unpleasant, and they helped to make our towns unpleasant too. But the Factory and Mines Acts of the last hundred years made things far better than they were when the Industrial Revolution had only just begun.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXIII

1 Make a time chart to illustrate *the Reform of the Factories and Mines*

## 2. Questions —

- (a) What were the chief evils in factories and mines in the early part of the nineteenth century ?
- (b) Why were children allowed to work in mines and factories, and what was their work like ?
- (c) Write an account of a day in your life, as it would have been if you were working in a mine or factory before 1833
- (d) What was *laissez-faire* ? In what ways was it good, and in what ways bad ?
- (e) What were the chief Factory and Mines Acts, and what did each of them say ?
- (f) What do you know about the following ?—Lord Shaftesbury, factory inspectors, employers' liability, workmen's compensation, National Insurance

## 3 Source Exercises —

(1) "I worked at Mr Swaine's, at Little Gomersall, near Leeds I earned 2s 6d a week, from six to half past seven I began when I was six years old I came to Leicester about three years ago I came as a spinner, I earn 24s or 25s a week, taking full work Mr Swaine's was a bad factory for cruelty to children in my time I have marks on me now from ill-treatment that I got there They would strike us with the bully roller over the head I have a bump on my head now, from that I have begun at five in the morning and worked till half past ten at night This would be when orders came"

This was said by Mr Josiah Barker, of Leicester

- (a) To whom do you suppose it was spoken, and when ?
- (b) Who were responsible for allowing young Josiah Barker to be treated in this way ? Why did they allow it ?
- (c) What was done to remedy the sort of thing described in this passage, by whom, and when ?

(11) "After the passing of this Act it shall not be lawful for any owner of any mine or colliery whatsoever to employ any female person within any mine or colliery . . ."

"It shall not be lawful for any owner of any mine or colliery to employ any male person under the age of ten years . . ."  
(*Statutes*, 5 and 6 Vic, 99)

- (a) Where do you suppose this passage is taken from ?
- (b) Why were these rules necessary ? To whom do they apply, and to whom do they *not* apply ?

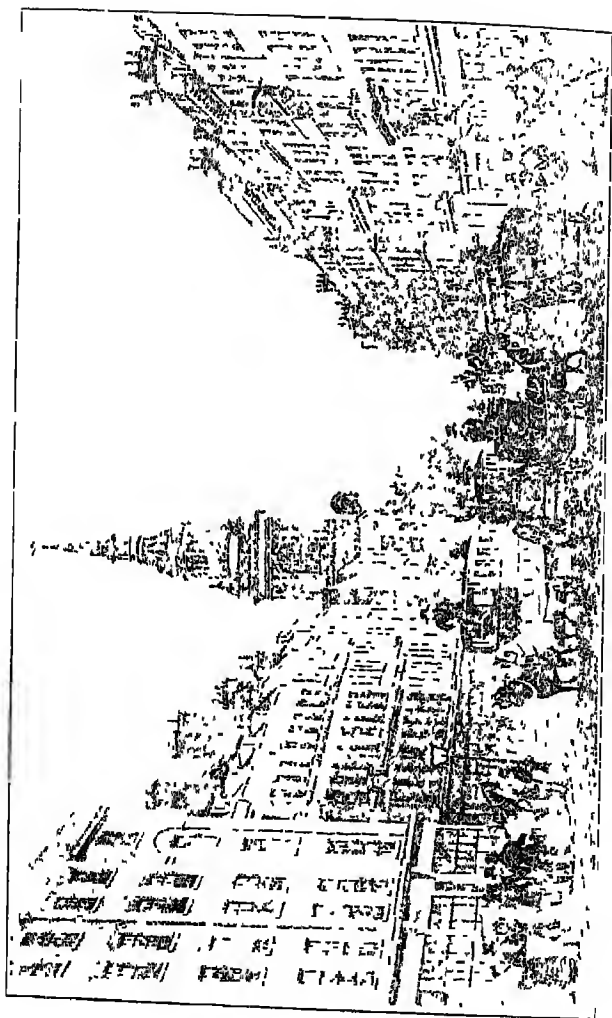
## CHAPTER XXIV

### TOWNS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

WE have already learnt (Chapter XXI) that until the eighteenth century London was the only big English town. Only a few towns had more than ten or twenty thousand inhabitants, and these few were nearly all in the southern half of England. The Industrial Revolution, however, caused a great flow of population to the north, this caused many northern villages to swell into towns, and in some cases (of which Middlesbrough is the best example) great towns have sprung up where there was, before, nothing more than a few houses.

**Mayors and Corporations.**—Even the older towns had grown anyhow, and there was no fixed way of choosing the *Mayors* and *Corporations* which governed them. In many towns the members of the corporation thought more about making their own fortunes at the town's expense, than of arranging what was best for the townspeople. Very often these corporations were descended from the medieval merchant gild of the town, and so they were more concerned with their own trade than with governing the town properly. Sometimes, too, the members of the corporation took for themselves the town money, which ought to have been spent in improving the town itself.

It was this state of things which led the Government to pass the *Municipal Reform Act* in 1835. This Act



CHEAPSIDE (LONDON) IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY.  
(For views of the same street at other periods, see pages 79, 133, and 187.)  
(From an old Print)

declared that in future all towns must be governed in the same way—by a mayor and corporation. But the corporation (or *Town Council*) was to be elected (at elections which are held every November) by the townspeople themselves and so the townspeople can remove from the corporation any *Councillor* who is unsatisfactory, simply by voting against him at the next election. The Municipal Reform Act also ordered that the corporations should elect senior councillors called *Aldermen*, and a mayor to direct them all. Within two or three years of this Act, town councils and mayors were appointed by many towns which, till then, had had no proper government at all.

**Slums.**—Since the passing of this Act, town councils have watched carefully over the growth of their towns. At first, they had a terrible task. In most towns, houses had been built in great numbers near the factories—all huddled together in *slums* in the centre of the town. Most of these houses were too small. Many were what are known as *back-to-back houses*—that is, there is no connection between the back and the front of each house, and different families live in the two parts.

All this was very unhealthy, and it was made worse by dirtiness. Very few houses had water-taps, even in a back yard. Instead, water had often to be fetched some distance, sometimes from a dirty stream. Even the largest houses rarely had baths. There were no proper sewers—only gutters where filth collected easily. Pig styes were often to be seen quite close to the house kitchens. It is not surprising, therefore, that fevers were constantly breaking out. Smallpox, typhoid fever, and cholera carried off thousands of people, simply because the town governments had not discovered that disease is spread by dirt.

**Public Health.**—Still, most of the new town councils were willing to do what they could, if only they had known what was best to do. So in 1848 a *Public Health Act* was passed, establishing a *General Board of Health* in London, whose duty it was to encourage towns to arrange themselves more cleanly and healthily. In less than five years, over eighty towns had Boards of Health of their own. After that public health improved rapidly. Another important Public Health Act was passed in 1875, and in 1917 a *Minister of Health* was appointed for the first time—a member of the Government, whose chief task is to safeguard the health of the people.

Even before 1835 and 1848 some towns had tried to make improvements. One of the first was Liverpool, which, in 1794, erected the first *Public Baths*. There is no big town in the country to-day without public baths, but the baths of Liverpool are still the finest of them all, since Liverpool has taken a pride in beating the other towns in this respect.

**The Water Supply.**—But before healthy towns were possible, drinking water, as well as washing water, had to be provided. We should be astonished if we could see the sort of water which townspeople regularly drank a century ago. In London, for example, some of the drinking water was taken from the Thames just below the place where several sewers were emptied into the river. So that London, with its sewers, was worse off than many towns with no sewers at all.

Glasgow was the first town to seek its water supply from a distant lake, out in the clean air of the mountains. Loch Katrine was made into a reservoir for Glasgow in 1856, twenty years later Manchester did the same with Thirlmere, in the Lake District, in 1877 Liverpool began to draw its water from the Welsh Lake Vyrnwy :



and in 1893 Birmingham started to make an artificial lake of her own in Radnorshire, and this has supplied most of her water since 1904. Other towns have followed these examples, and those without natural reservoirs obtain pure water from *artesian wells*, which are holes bored to a great depth in the earth, and through which the water forces itself upwards.

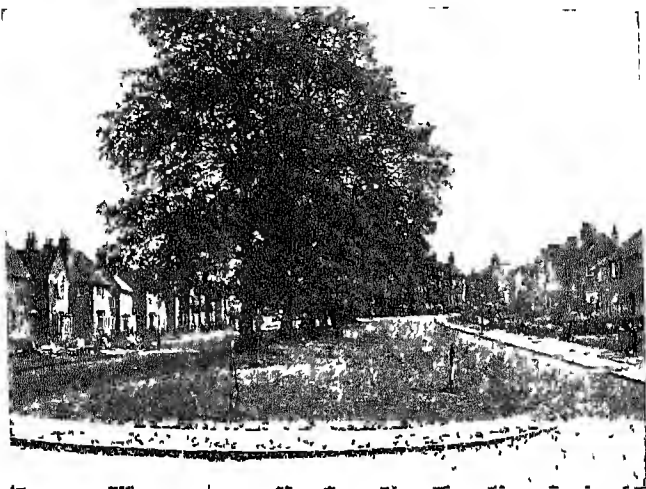
Water supply is only one of many things which occupy a modern town council. In many towns the gas as well as the electricity is supplied by the corporation. Trams are connected with electricity, buses are connected with trams, and both trams and buses nowadays usually belong to the town council.

**Going to Business.**—The development of tram and bus services has had a peculiar effect, which has been helped by the invention of bicycles, motor bicycles, and motor cars. These means of getting about from place to place have made it possible for even poor people to live a long way from their business, and consequently, the centres of our towns are becoming less crowded. People prefer to live just outside in the *suburbs*, and often, although they make their money in the town, they pay house rates to their *Urban District Council* instead of to the town council. It is, of course, the rates which pay for everything which the councils see fit to do.

Besides all this, the happiness of the townspeople has to be considered. Apart from the theatres and picture palaces, which belong to private people and have to be paid for separately, there are public *parks* (often with concerts in summer), *libraries*, and *art galleries*, provided out of the rates by the town corporation.

**The Police.**—No town could be well conducted, and its citizens could not be happy or even safe, if order and

quiet were not well kept, and this, of course, is the work of the *Police Force*. It was in 1829 that *Sir Robert Peel*, the Home Secretary, had an Act passed establishing the *Metropolitan Police Force* in the London district. Before then there had been nothing better than *watchmen*, who went round at night to see that nothing was



WEOLEY HILL, BOURNVILLE, BIRMINGHAM

Illustrating the planning of a modern manufacturing town.

(By permission of Messrs Cadbury Brothers Limited.)

wrong, but who had no special training (see Chapter IX). Other towns soon followed London's example, and had police forces of their own—usually with Fire Brigades connected with them. In 1856 another Act compelled the counties, as well as the towns, to employ policemen, and to-day the English police force is the finest in the world.

**Town Planning.**—In quite modern times, towns have paid most attention to *Town Planning*—that is, to arranging the streets and buildings of the town so as to be as convenient and beautiful as possible, with plenty of open spaces to provide fresh air. Until the end of the nineteenth century towns were allowed

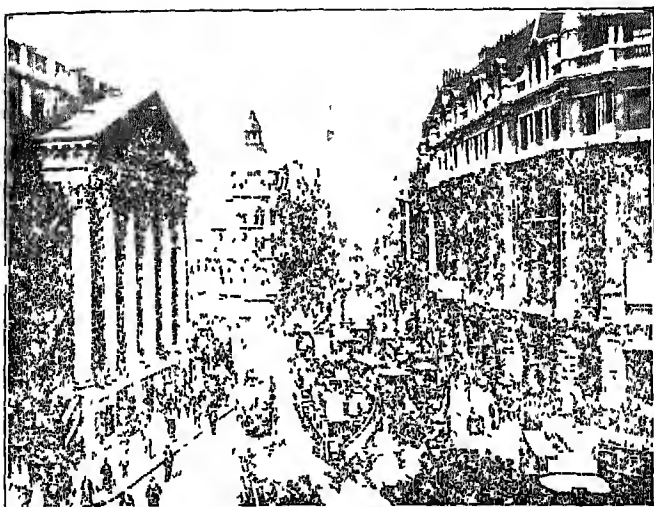


Photo S. Ellis

CHEAPSIDE (LONDON) TO-DAY

(For views of the same street at earlier periods, see pages 79, 133, and 182.)

to expand anyhow. Consequently, streets were often winding and ugly, and crowded slums grew up in every town. In America, where most towns are very new, they were planned, from the first, much more conveniently, with parallel streets in which it is very difficult to lose one's way. New town districts in England are now being built in much the same manner, and the older parts of towns are being improved. The

*Town Planning Act* of 1909 ordered all towns gradually to clear away their worst slums, and forbade builders to erect any more back-to-back houses

Since then there has been much progress. Model villages and garden cities are becoming more and more common, and every town is year by year improving its appearance, its health, and the happiness of its citizens.

### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXIV

1. Make a time chart to illustrate the development of towns in the nineteenth century

#### 2. Questions .—

- (a) How were towns affected by the Industrial Revolution?
- (b) What was the Municipal Reform Act, and what faults did it remedy?
- (c) How is a modern town governed? Who chooses its government, and how?
- (d) What are the chief duties of a modern town corporation, and how are its expenses paid?
- (e) What do you know about the health of towns in the early nineteenth century? How has it been improved?
- (f) In what different ways is the health of a modern town safeguarded?
- (g) In every town, about nine o'clock in the morning, there are streams of people "going to business" (i) How long has this been usual? (ii) What caused it? (iii) How does it affect town life?
- (h) Write a short account of the history of the police force.
- (i) Make a list of urban districts bordering on your town
- (j) What do you know about town planning? How is it carried out?
- (k) What do you know about the following?—Aldermen, town councils, "back-to-back" houses, Public Health Acts, General Board of Health, Loch Katrine, Thirlmere, Lake Vyrnwy, artesian wells, suburbs, urban district councils, Sir Robert Peel

3. Source Exercises —

(1) "Be it enacted, that in every borough shall be elected . . . one fit person, who shall be called '*the Mayor*' of such borough, and a certain number of fit persons, who shall be called '*Aldermen*' of such borough, and a certain other number of fit persons, who shall be called the '*Councillors*' of such borough, and such Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors for the time being shall be called the '*Council*' of such borough

"And be it enacted, that upon the *first day of November* 1836, and in every succeeding year, one third part of the councillors of every borough shall go out of office

"Certain boroughs of large population should be divided into *wards*, before any election of councillors for such boroughs should take place" (*Statutes, 5 and 6 William IV, 76*)

(a) From what Act are these passages taken? Why was this Act necessary, and what changes did it make?

(b) What is meant in this Act by "fit persons"?

(c) Describe how town councils are chosen

(d) Why do only a third of the councillors retire each year?

(e) Write notes on the words in italics.

(11) "Whereas offences against property have of late increased in and near the *Metropolis*, and the local establishments of *Nightly Watch* and *Nightly Police* have been found inadequate to the prevention and detection of crime . . .

"Be it enacted, that the whole of the city and liberties of Westminster, and such of the *parishes*, townships, precincts, and places in the counties of Middlesex, Surrey, and Kent as are enumerated in the *schedule* to this Act, shall be constituted . . . into one district, to be called '*The Metropolitan Police District*', and a sufficient number of fit and able men shall from time to time be appointed as a *Police Force* for the whole of such district, who shall be *sworn in* by one of the said *Justices* to act as *constables* for preserving the peace, and preventing robberies and other *felonies*, and *apprehending* offenders against the peace" (*Statutes, 10 Geo IV, 44*)

(a) From what Act is this taken? Why was it necessary? To what district did it apply? What improvements did it make?

- (b) Through what great statesman was this Act passed ?  
What position did he hold in the Government (i) at this time, (ii) later ? How is his name commemorated in names by which policemen are sometimes called ?
- (c) When was this Act extended to the whole country ?
- (d) Write notes on the words in italics

1 Draw maps or plans of —

- (a) The centre of your town (i) as it is now, (ii) as it might be improved, (iii) showing any recent improvements.
- (b) Your town, marking all the open spaces.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE RELIEF OF THE POOR

PERIODS when great changes are going on are always harder for poor people than for anybody else. Sometimes the very changes which will help to make the nation more prosperous, at first make the poor less prosperous. This was so in the sixteenth century, when (as we saw in Chapter XII) enclosures and rising prices made it very difficult for the lowest classes to live in comfort. Before long, therefore, the Government began to realise that, since the poor were suffering so that the State might become richer, therefore the State ought to help them in their troubles.

**The Poor Law of 1601.**—For this reason the *Poor Law* of 1601 was passed at the end of Elizabeth's reign. In order to find money for helping the poor, it commanded that the people of every parish should contribute to a *Poor Rate*, which the churchwardens were to collect. With this money they were to assist those who were too old or too ill to work, those who wanted work, but could not obtain it, were to be employed and paid by the parish, and those who refused to work were to be sent to prison. The *Poor Rate* was also to be used for children who wished to become apprenticed to a trade, but could not find the money for this themselves.

This Act of 1601 was one of the most important ever passed to deal with *Poor Relief*—that is, the assistance

of those in poverty. It showed that the Government realised that truly poor people ought to be helped by those who were more fortunate, helped to work, if possible, if not, helped to live until they could find work. But it also showed that those who were poor because they were lazy were to be treated very severely.

**Tramps and Acts of Settlement.**—After 1601 things were less difficult than they had been. Still, there were plenty of poor people, so many that each parish tried to get rid of as many as possible, in order to avoid paying for them. Consequently, poor people often wandered from parish to parish, and if they were not allowed to live in any one parish for the forty days which were necessary by law, they were never entitled to relief from anywhere. So they became *vagrants*, or *vagabonds*, that is, “tramps.”

In order to remedy this, the first *Act of Settlement* was passed in 1662, which said that all “vagrants” should be sent back to their native place. In one way this was good—it made the “vagrant” sure of his poor relief. But it also prevented the unemployed from leaving their homes to find work in other villages or towns, and in this way it prevented poverty from being lessened.

**Unions and Workhouses.**—Sixty years later it was still difficult for the parishes to pay for work for paupers. So in 1722 an Act was passed, allowing parishes to join together and form *Unions*. Each of these unions was to maintain a *Workhouse*, and no pauper who refused to work in the workhouse (or pass the *workhouse test*, as it was called), was to be granted relief. These “unions” of parishes still exist, and often the workhouses themselves are called “unions.”

**The Poor Law made Easier.**—Thus, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Poor Law was stricter



than ever. By the end of the century, however, the Industrial Revolution was in full swing. prices were rising far more rapidly than wages, and machinery was causing much unemployment. Distress among the poor was so great that the Poor Law was made easier. *Gilbert's Act*, in 1782, ordered that "able-bodied" poor should be given work near their homes, and that only the aged and infirm should have to go to the workhouses. In 1795 the magistrates of Berkshire, meeting at *Speenhamland*, came to a decision which set an example of leniency to the whole country. This decision was to guarantee good wages to all men, whether employed or out of work, and to let these wages rise as much as prices.

At this time, and for another twenty years, England was at war with Napoleon and the French, and Gilbert's Act and the Speenhamland decision helped to lighten the distress which was caused by the war and by the Industrial Revolution. But it is easy to see how laziness would be encouraged. Men who were sure of wages anyhow would not bother to work for them, and within a few years the parishes were everywhere paying far more poor relief than they could afford.

**New Poor Laws, 1834 and 1928.**—It was this which caused the *Poor Law Amendment Act* of 1834 to be passed. By this Act the Poor Law was made strict again. *Out-relief* (that is, payment of relief to paupers in their own homes, instead of in the workhouses) was forbidden, unless the consent of two magistrates was obtained. The parishes were once again to grant relief through their unions and workhouses, and each union was to be governed by a *Board of Guardians*. These Guardians were to be elected by the ratepayers whose money they spent.

The Poor Law of 1834 remained in force for nearly a century, although changes were really needed much

earlier. Guardians were elected by the parishes, and not like members of Parliament, yet they had to carry out a Poor Law which Parliament had passed. Besides this, the Ministry of Health, and sometimes, too, the Ministry of Labour, could interfere with the Guardians. In 1928, therefore, a *Local Government Act* was passed handing over the duties of the Guardians to the Town and County Councils from 1930 onwards.

This is not the only way in which the lot of the poor was much improved early in the twentieth century. In 1908 a law was passed providing *Old Age Pensions* for everybody over seventy years of age. In 1909 *Labour Exchanges*, or *Employment Exchanges*, were established to help employers to find men, and workers to find employment, as quickly as possible. The *National Insurance Act* of 1911 made unemployment and sickness less dreadful for the poor by enabling them to save money, and by guaranteeing that they shall never be quite penniless. In 1925 an Act was passed giving pensions at the age of sixty-five to all contributors to the National Insurance, and even before that age to women whose husbands have died and left them poor. Since then other Acts have made these pensions and unemployment payments better still.

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXV

- 1 Make a time chart to illustrate the history of the Poor Law since 1600
- 2 Questions —
  - (a) Why was a new Poor Law necessary in 1601?
  - (b) What were the terms of the Poor Law of 1601, and why was it important?
  - (c) What were the Acts of Settlement, and why were they necessary? What good and what harm did they do?
  - (d) Into what different classes does the Poor Law divide poor people?
  - (e) Why was the Poor Law made easier at the end of the eighteenth century? What were the good and the bad results of this?

- (f) What do you know about the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 ? Why did the Poor Law need "amendment" and how was it amended ?
- (g) How was the lot of the poor improved during the first quarter of the twentieth century ?
- (h) What do you know about the following ? — Poor Relief, Out-Relief, Unions, Workhouses, Guardians, Gilbert's Act, Speenhamland, Poor Rate, Employment Exchanges, National Insurance, Old Age Pensions

### 3. Source Exercises —

(1) "Be it enacted—that the *churchwardens* of every parish, and four, three, or two substantial householders, shall be called Overseers of the Poor of the same parish, and they . . . shall take order from time to time, with the consent of two or more *justices of the peace*, for setting to work . . . all such persons, married or unmarried, as, having no means to maintain them, use no ordinary and daily trade of life to get their living by, and also to raise by *taxation* of every inhabitant and every occupier of lands in the said parish a convenient stock of flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron, and other stuff to set the poor to work, and also competent sums of money for the necessary relief of the lame, impotent, old, blind, and such other among them, being poor and not able to work, and also for the putting out of such children to be *apprentices*

"And the said justices of peace, or any of them, to send to the house of correction, or common gaol, such as shall not employ themselves to work, being appointed thereto as aforesaid

"And the justices of peace . . . shall *rate* every parish to such a weekly sum of money as they shall think convenient" (*Statutes of the Realm*, Vol IV, Part II, pages 962-3.)

- (a) From what Act is this passage taken ?
- (b) Make a numbered list of the provisions of this Act
- (c) What was to be done with the "flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron, and other stuff" ?
- (d) What part of speech is the word *rate* in the last line but one ? Why are payments to the parish still called *rates*, whereas payments to the State are called *taxes* ? Find out the exact meaning of both these words
- (e) Write notes on the words in italics.

(11) " And be it further enacted, that where any parishes shall be united . . for the administration of the laws for the relief of the poor, a *Board of Guardians* of the poor for such *Union* shall be constituted and chosen, and the *workhouse* or workhouses of such Union shall be governed, and the relief of the poor in such Union shall be administered, by such Board of Guardians, and the said Guardians shall be elected by the *ratepayers* " (*Statutes, 4 and 5 William IV, 76*)

- (a) From what Act is this passage taken ?
- (b) Is there anything in this passage which is not contained in passage No (1) ? Explain the reason for your answer
- (c) How long did this Act remain law ?
- (d) Write notes on the words in italics.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### LABOUR AND CAPITAL IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

**The Meaning of "Labour" and "Capital."**—If we like, we can divide people into two classes—those who work for others, and those who have others working for them, or, in other words, those who are employees and those who are employers. No one can afford to be an employer unless he has saved a good deal of money. Money which has been saved is called *Capital*, and so employers are often called *Capitalists*, or "owners of capital." Sometimes the word "Capital" is used to mean all the capitalists put together; and so when we hear people talking of "Capital" and "Labour," we know that they mean "employers" and "employed."

At first, under the factory system, employers and employed did not get on well together. As we have seen (Chapter XXIII), the employers made their work-people work too hard, and the Factory Reform Acts had to be passed. But the Factory Reform Acts brought much more benefit to women and children than to men, and long after it was illegal for women and children to work more than ten hours a day, men were allowed to work as long as their employers kept them.

**Wages and Prices.**—Often, too, their wages were very small. We have already learned (page 177) of a man who, in 1833, was earning 12s. a week, and lower wages than this were quite common. At this time the ordinary two-pound loaf was costing about 5d., and

we need only compare these figures with the wages and prices of to-day, to see how hard it was, at that time, for the working classes to buy what they needed, without even thinking of luxuries.

The Factory Acts made no regulations about wages. The doctrine of *Laissez-faire* said that it was best to leave the workmen and their masters to settle such things by themselves. But those who believed in *Laissez-faire* forgot that the masters had plenty of capital whereas the workers had none. If a workman refused to work for low wages, he had nothing to live on, whereas, if an employer refused to pay high wages, he could afford to wait until the workmen were willing to take what he offered them.

Thus we see that the workers could not bargain for better wages, because they had no money to fall back upon. Their only hope of forcing the employers to pay them proper wages was by banding themselves together, instead of bargaining with the employers man by man. At first this was impossible, because there were laws which forbade workmen to form societies, either for raising wages or for shortening the working day.

**Trade Unions.**—These laws were called the *Combination Acts*, because they made it illegal for workmen to *combine* for their own benefit. The first thing to do was to get these Acts repealed. The leader of the workmen in this was *Francis Place*, and after years of agitation he persuaded the Government to repeal the *Combination Acts* in 1824. Since then, combinations of workmen (or *Trade Unions*, as they are now called) have been lawful, and it is these Trade Unions which have gradually improved wages and brought into fashion a shorter working day.

**Strikes.**—In recent years, employers have been more willing to make things easier for their work-

people, because they have found that contented employees do better work than tired, discontented ones. But at first the workers had to fight for every privilege—usually by going on *strike* that is, by all refusing to work until the employer agreed to what they asked. Some employers were frightened by these strikes, and gave way. But others decided to fight the workmen, and when the workers in one factory threatened to strike, all the employers in the district would threaten to *lock out* the workmen in all their factories, and throw them out of work. Thus strikes often led to *lock-outs*, and the workmen were as badly off as ever.

Thus made it necessary for the workers to unite in many districts, in order to fight together against the employers. By the end of the century all the Trade Unions, of all the trades in the country, were ready to fight on behalf of one another. Every year since 1897 there have been meetings of the *Trades Unions Congress*, at which members of all Trade Unions discuss their grievances, and consider how to amend them. Sometimes, when the workers in one trade are on strike, the other unions give money to help to keep them while they are out of work. On several occasions the Trade Unions Congress has threatened to cause a *General Strike* of all the workpeople in the country, and so compel the Government to put right what they consider to be unfair. But the only time the General Strike has been tried so far (in 1926), it failed completely, and was stopped in less than a fortnight.

**The Labour Party.**—The Trade Unions exist for other purposes, besides fighting for better wages and easier work. They contribute money to a *political fund*, which pays the expenses of Members of Parliament belonging to the *Labour Party*. The Labour Party spends its time in Parliament in trying to improve the lot of the workmen by peaceful methods—especially by

getting popular new laws passed and unpopular old laws abolished. Besides this, the Trade Unions have funds for helping their members during unemployment, for helping the widows and children of workmen who have died, and so on.

So far we have been considering the struggle between "Labour and Capital," and we have seen how the workpeople have managed to get much of what they have wanted, in the way of wages and shorter hours. But there was another struggle in the nineteenth century—between *consumers* (or the people who buy goods) and *producers* (who sell them). The Industrial Revolution had not been going on long when people began to think that unfair profits were being made. It was soon seen, however, that it was not the manufacturers who were making these profits, but the *middlemen* who bought goods from the manufacturers and sold them again to those who wanted them.

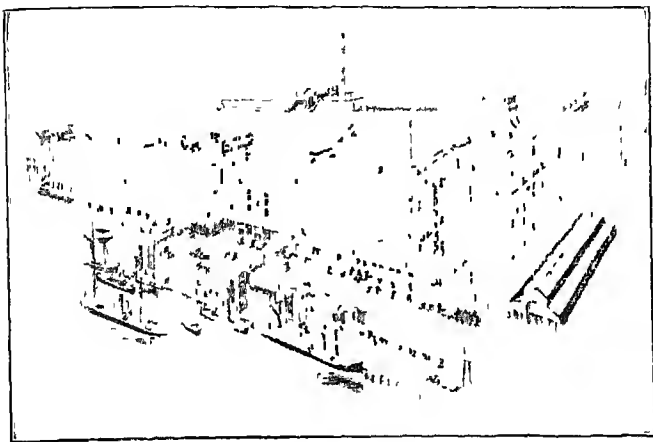
**Co-operative Societies.**—Again, it was the working people who suffered most, because, being poor, they could not afford to pay high prices. So in 1844, twenty-eight working men in Rochdale joined together to form a *co-operative society*. "Co-operation" means "working together," and they did this by being their own middlemen—that is, they bought goods direct from the manufacturers, and sold them again to themselves in their own little shop.

To start with they had only £28—£1 apiece, and they bought and sold nothing but sugar, butter, flour, and oatmeal. But others soon joined them: within a year they had £181; by 1850 they had £2,300, and by 1860 their capital amounted to £37,000.

This was a wonderful development, and it was due to the workers realising how much they could gain by co-operation. Every year the profits made in the co-operative store were divided (and so they were called



*dividend*) among the members, in proportion to the amount of money each had spent. Thus a member who had spent £10 in a quarter got twice as much dividend as one who had spent £5, and so on. Members could please themselves whether they spent their dividend, or left it in the store bank. Many of them chose to



A CWS FLOUR MILL, MANCHESTER

(One of over 100 factories owned by the Co operative Wholesale Society )

(By permission of the Co operative Press Agency )

save it, and so thrift was encouraged among the working-class members of the store.

Other co-operative stores soon began to grow up in other towns, until there are now about 1,400 different societies, with four million members between them. Every year they sell about 150 million pounds worth of goods.

All these societies have a sort of head society of their own, called the *Co-operative Wholesale Society*, which

was established in 1863. Each local Co-operative Society pays a subscription to the Co-operative Wholesale Society, buys its goods from it, and receives dividend on its purchases, just as its own members receive dividends for the money they spend. The Co-operative Wholesale Society owns over 100 factories which make goods solely for the various retail societies, and it has tea plantations in Ceylon, farms in England and the colonies, and even a bank of its own. All this mighty organisation has developed from the tiny store with twenty-eight members, established in Toad Lane, Rochdale, in 1844.

**Friendship between "Labour" and "Capital."**—The Co-operative movement has been a peaceful way of avoiding unpleasantness over the sale of goods. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, peaceful ways of avoiding unpleasantness between employers and workpeople began to be found. It was discovered that men, working hard for eight hours a day, usually did more than men who went on until they were tired out. So eight hours has become the usual length of the working day, although the law allows most employers to keep their workmen for ten hours a day, if they wish to do so.

Similarly, employers have realised that if their workpeople have pleasant homes, and something to interest them during their leisure hours, they are happier and work better. For this reason some firms have built *model villages* for their employees, with comfortable houses and pretty streets. The best-known of these model villages are *Bournville*, where Cadbury's chocolate and cocoa are made, and *Port Sunlight*, the soap town.

There are other model villages besides these, and even where it is impossible to build a whole village, many firms nowadays provide their workers with a *Welfare Club*. Here there are usually playing fields, tennis courts, and so on, for the athletes; a library for

those who want books to read, billiard and chess rooms, and other things to provide healthy recreation.

Some firms have even gone further than that, by allowing their workers to share either in the control of the business, or in the profits which it makes. Employees are sometimes allowed to help in the management, and this is called *Labour Co-partnership*. Other businesses have *Profit-Sharing*, so that the employees are better off when the business is prospering. In both cases the workers are encouraged to take a real interest in their work, and so there is less trouble between them and their employers.

**Joint Stock Companies**—All this sort of thing has been made much easier by a change which has taken place in the employers themselves. A hundred, and even fifty, years ago, most businesses had one man at the head, and he was the owner of the whole business. Nowadays, the manager, or managing director, is an employee like those who are under him; he is the chief of the workers, and he earns more money only because his work is more responsible. In large businesses to-day the owners are *shareholders*—that is, people (thousands of them, very often) who have *invested* money in the business, and who, therefore, share the profits. A business like this with many shareholders is called a *Joint Stock Company*, because the *Stock* (or “shares”) is owned jointly by a number of people. These shareholders hardly ever see the employees, and never interfere in their work. That is done by the manager, who is an employee himself, and so he is perhaps less likely to annoy his fellow-employees, or be annoyed by them, than a single man owning the whole business would be.

## EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXVI

1. Find out as much as you can about the following, and then write short notes on them —Francis Place, the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Model Villages
2. Make time charts to illustrate the history in the nineteenth century, of (a) Trade Unions and Strikes, (b) Co-operation.

## 3 Questions :—

- (a) What do you understand by *Capital* and *Labour*?
- (b) What benefits did workpeople obtain from the Factory Acts? Why were those Acts not enough by themselves?
- (c) Compare the price of bread in 1833 (page 197) with its price now. Then, assuming that the prices of other things have changed in the same proportion, make a list showing how a workman would spend a weekly wage of twelve shillings in 1833.
- (d) In what way was *Laissez-faire* unjust to the working classes?
- (e) What are the arguments for and against a General Strike?
- (f) Write an account of the Co operative Movement during the last one hundred years.
- (g) Show how industry has gained since 1800 by (i) disagreements, and (ii) agreements, between employers and employees.
- (h) What do you know of the following?—*Laissez-faire*, Combination Acts, Trade Unions, Strikes, Lock-Outs, Trade Unions Congress, Political Fund, Consumers, Producers, Dividend, Welfare Clubs, Labour Co-partnership, Profit-sharing; Joint Stock.

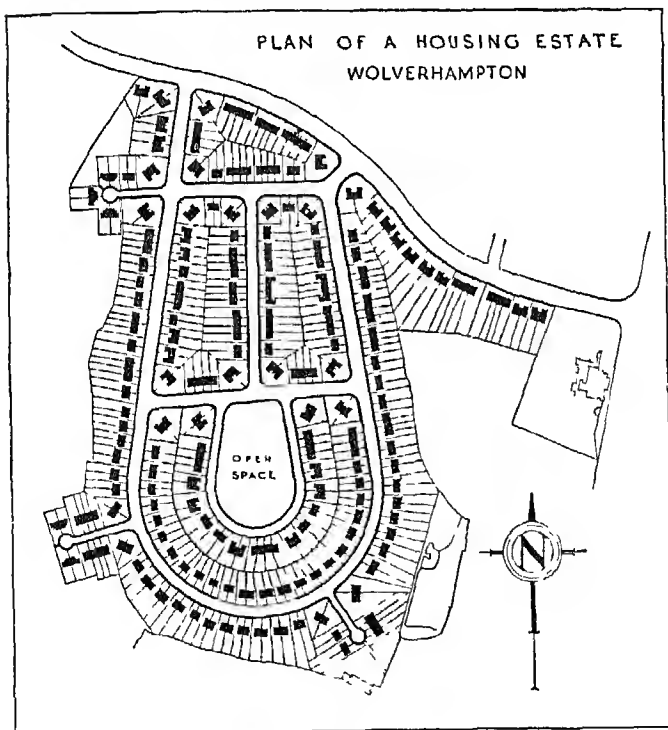
## 4 Source Exercise .—

“Journemen, workmen, or other persons who shall enter into any *combination* to obtain an advance, or to fix the rate of wages, or to lessen or alter the hours or duration of the time of working . . shall not therefore be subject or liable to any *indictment* or *prosecution* for conspiracy under the common or the statute law

“And be it further enacted that masters, employers, or other persons who shall enter into any combination to lower or to fix the rate of wages, or to increase or alter the hours or duration of the time of working . . shall not therefore be subject or liable to any indictment or prosecution.” (*Statutes*, 5 Geo IV, 95.)

- (a) From what Act is this passage taken? What alteration did it make in the law, and why?
- (b) Considering that these two clauses use almost the same words about workmen and masters, do you think the Act was equally fair to both? Give reasons for your answer.
- (c) What is meant by "combinations" (i) of workmen, (ii) of masters? Give present-day examples of each.
- (d) What is the difference between the "common law" and "statute law"? To which of the two does this Act belong?

6. Draw plans of any model villages you know.



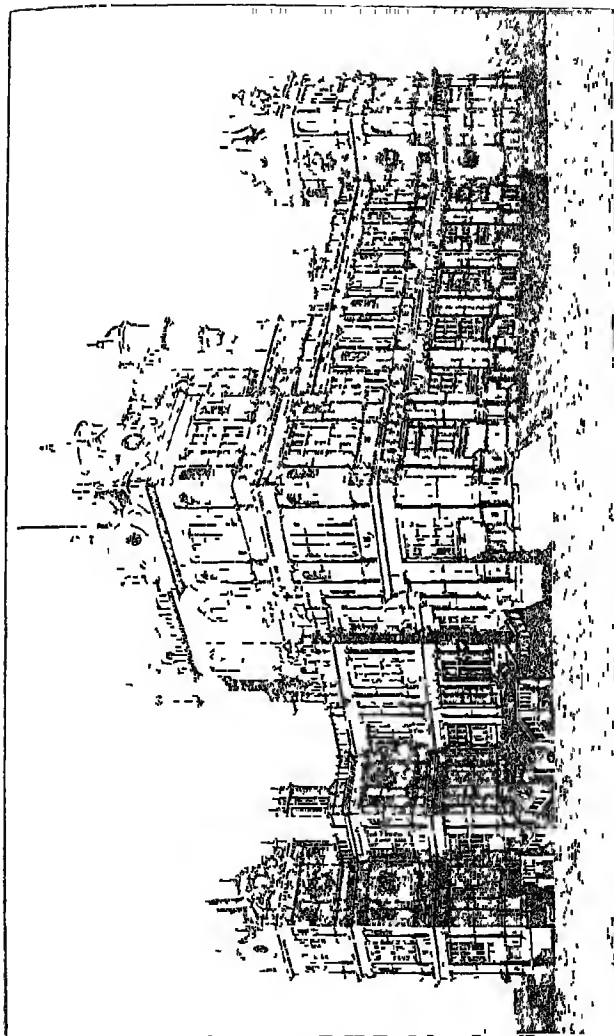
MODERN TOWN-PLANNING.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE IN MODERN TIMES

**Renaissance Architecture.**—We have already learnt (page 122) how the movement called the Renaissance, which changed so many things, influenced English building. In the sixteenth century, the Gothic architecture of the Middle Ages began to go out of fashion, and *classical* architecture (that is, architecture modelled on that of ancient Greece and Rome) took its place. The first people to revive this ancient style of building was the Italians. One of the greatest of Italian architects was *Michael Angelo*, who was equally famous as a sculptor and painter. Another was *Palladio*, who played such an important part in introducing the new style, that it is sometimes called the *Palladian* style.

English builders were slow in adopting this new *Palladian* or *Renaissance* style of building. At first, they were content with having a few Renaissance decorations on buildings which were erected in the old Gothic manner. Next, they began to build in a mixed style, half Gothic and half Renaissance. Wollaton Hall, near Nottingham (page 207), is a good example of this. The highest part of the building (of which we can only see three windows and three turrets in the illustration) is like medieval Gothic architecture. The windows are much like the ordinary flowing decorated windows which were common in the fourteenth century (see pages 112-113), and which, in Nottinghamshire, often had flat tops instead of pointed ones. But the



EARLY RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE (WOLLATON HALL, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, BUILT ABOUT 1580).  
(From Gardiner's "A Student's History of England")

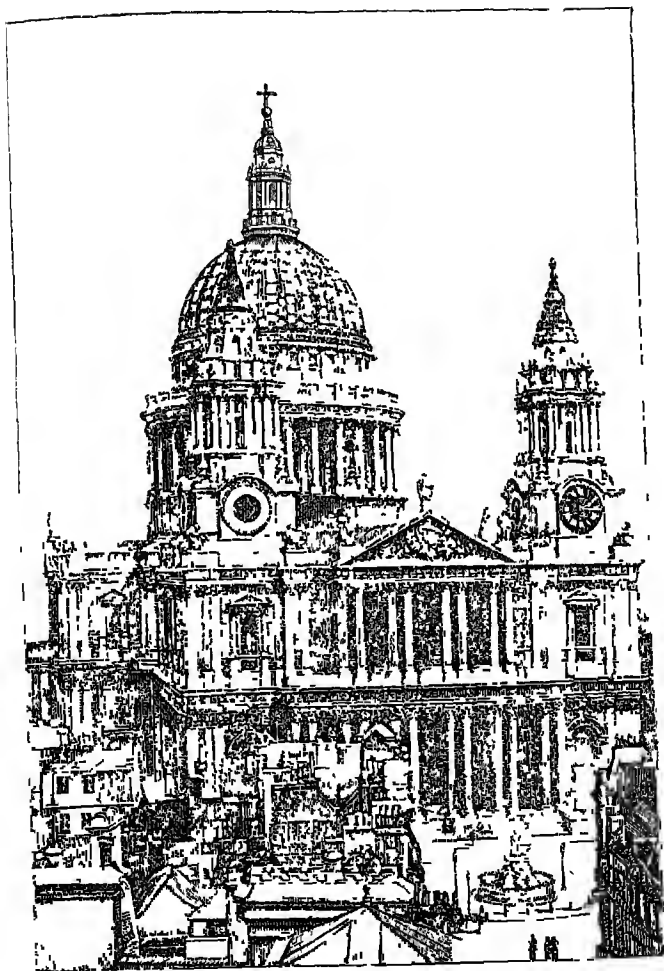
lower part of the Hall surrounding the central tower, is not Gothic at all. The windows are all quite rectangular, and the niches (for statues) are not pointed, but round. Moreover, between every pair of windows there are two half-pillars, or *pilasters*. These pilasters look flat and square, quite unlike Gothic pillars, and the heavy *cornices* which they seem to support, the square bases on which they rest, and the flat band across the middle of each of them, are all patterns copied from ancient classical architecture.

Wollaton Hall was built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and many similar houses were built at that time. In fact, we shall notice that most of the big buildings erected in modern times, until the nineteenth century, have been dwelling-houses. The people of the Middle Ages made churches their chief buildings, because, in those Catholic times, church services were an important part of everyday life. In the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the big buildings were mostly halls or palaces, and in quite modern times, the biggest buildings have been places of business.

**Inigo Jones.**—Early in the seventeenth century the King of England, Charles I, decided to erect a magnificent palace in Whitehall, at Westminster. The architect who designed it was *Inigo Jones*, the first great English architect of modern times. But Charles I was always short of money, and only a part of his palace was completed. This was the Banqueting Hall, which can still be seen in London, in Whitehall, and it is the best example of Inigo Jones's work which remains for us to see.

**Sir Christopher Wren.**—When Inigo Jones was an old man, there was a young man who was becoming prominent as an architect. This was *Christopher Wren*, who





LATER RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE (ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL,  
BUILT ABOUT 1700)

(From Gardiner's "*A Student's History of England*")

is now considered to be the greatest architect England has ever had. Yet it was partly through good luck that he became famous. He began life as a doctor, and then became a well-known astronomer. While he was a young man, the Civil War between the King and the Parliament, and the troubles which followed (1640 to 1660), prevented much building being done at all. But soon after the Stuarts were restored an accident gave Wren the chance to make himself famous.

This was the Great Fire of London (1666). Nearly all the City was destroyed, and Wren was the man chosen to rebuild the chief churches. This task occupied him for the rest of the century. He built about forty churches in the City of London, and the greatest of these was St Paul's Cathedral, which was finished in 1705, and is one of the most famous buildings in the world.

The illustration on page 209 shows how fine it is. It is the most important building in the Renaissance style in England, and from it more can be learned about that style than from any other. There are the classical pillars, with *capitals* carved in a manner copied from the Greeks. The arches everywhere are round, and the flat windows are surmounted by little triangular *pediments*. The big pediment over the middle of the west end is filled with carved figures; and this, too, is copied from Greek architecture.

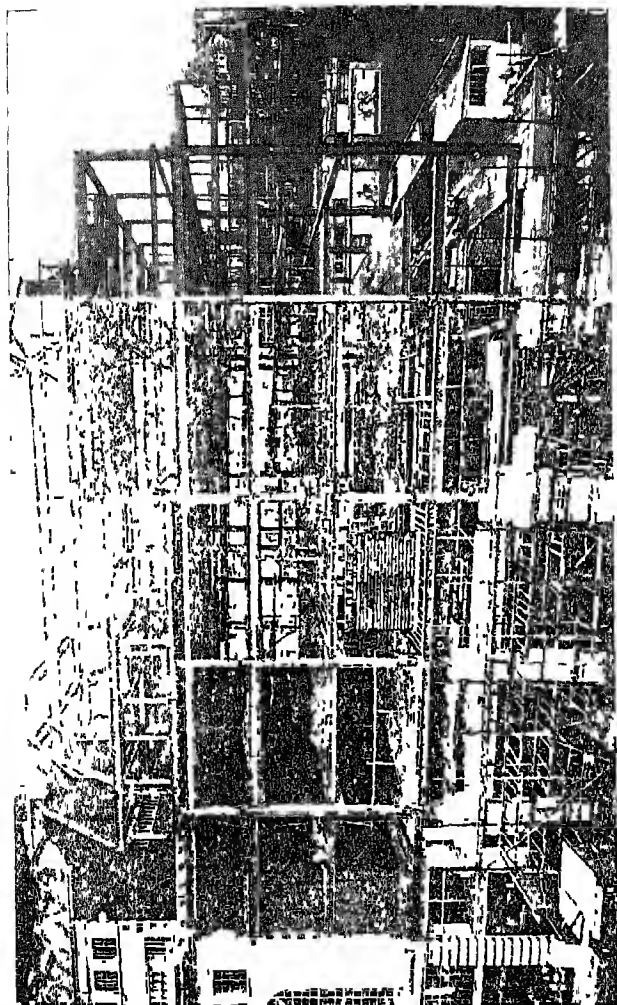
But although Wren, like all Renaissance architects, copied the details of his work from ancient classical buildings, he had also many ideas of his own. The dome of St Paul's, for example, is of a shape devised by Wren himself, though domes were invented in the East, and not by him. And it is the shape and proportions of this dome which make it so fine and so famous. Besides this, there are two rows, or storeys, of pillars, all round St Paul's—and this, too, is unlike anything in the architecture of Greece.

**The Successors of Wren.**—Wren was so busy with his churches that he had less time than most architects for building mansions and palaces. He did, however, build in the Renaissance style a new part of Hampton Court Palace for King William III, and after his death great houses were built apace. Perhaps the most famous of these eighteenth-century houses is the palace at Blenheim, which was built by the architect *Vanbrugh* to commemorate the most famous victory of its owner, the Duke of Marlborough.

At the same time, the Renaissance style was spreading, and most new churches and other buildings were built in this fashion. But after Wren's death architects became less skilled, and Somerset House (London), by *Sir William Chambers*, is one of the few really great buildings of the later eighteenth century.

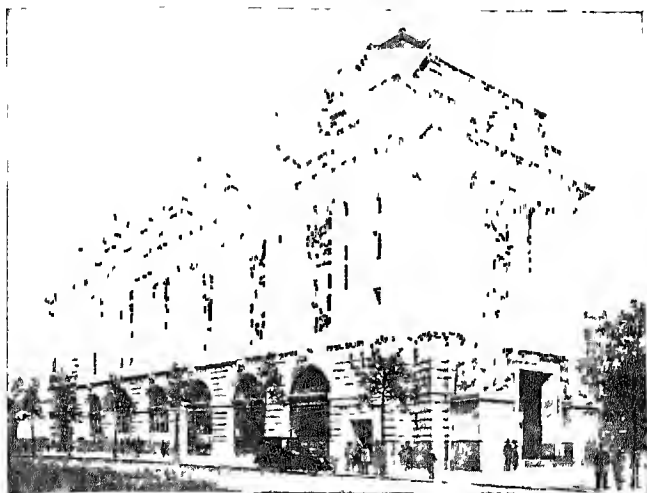
**Revival of Gothic Architecture.**—In the nineteenth century there was a change in fashion. A few Renaissance buildings continued to be erected, but Gothic architecture came into fashion again—not only for churches, but for all kinds of buildings. Nearly every town contains a number of churches built, during the nineteenth century, in Gothic, and this century has seen the building (by *Sir Gilbert Scott*) of Liverpool Cathedral, a really great building in the Gothic style. One of the most famous Gothic buildings of the nineteenth century is the Houses of Parliament, the architect of which was *Sir Charles Barry*.

**Steel Buildings.**—In modern times, however, a return has been made to the Renaissance style, though some changes have been introduced. One of the greatest of these changes is in the manner of erecting large buildings. In the old days stone was laid slowly upon stone from the foundations to the roof. Nowadays, our large buildings are simply huge frameworks of steel,



STEEL FRAME BUILDING  
(By permission of Messrs Higgs & Hill Ltd.)

and the masonry is fitted into these frameworks (page 212) Yet this, like so many changes, is only an old fashion revived and brought up to date For these steel frameworks are just the same sort of thing as the oak frameworks of half-timbered buildings (pages 84 and 115), and the masonry is fitted into them in much the same way



AUSTRALIA HOUSE, LONDON

*(By permission of the High Commissioner for Australia.)*

Perhaps, some day before long, architects will allow their steel frameworks to be seen on the outside of the finished buildings, and we shall have half-steel buildings which look something like the half-timbered buildings of the Middle Ages Already there are small signs of this If you look carefully at the picture of Australia House, you will see that the three storeys of windows between the pillars are separated, not

by stone, but by steel. This part of the steelwork has been allowed to become prominent, and in some buildings it is painted so as to be very prominent indeed.

**Modern English Architecture.** — Australia House (which was finished in 1918) illustrates several other features of quite modern English architecture. For one thing, modern buildings are often so tall that the pillars would seem too small if they were not several storeys in height. As we look at Australia House, it appears at first to be a building of two storeys (not counting the roof). But on closer inspection, we see from the windows that there are eight floors in all. By thus using pillars several storeys in height, architects can provide enough floors for the many offices needed, without causing the outside of the building to seem merely a mass of windows. The steeply-sloping roof, too, is found in many modern buildings. In former times, architects preferred to hide the roofs of their buildings. Nowadays the roof (which, after all, is a very important part of every building) is constructed so as to add to the beauty of the whole.

In quite recent times architecture has become more "modern" still. Buildings nowadays usually show by their appearance what they are meant for, and they are usually very plain, because the architects prefer making them beautiful by their shape and proportions rather than by decorations. A good example of recent building is Broadcasting House, which is illustrated on page 221.

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXVII

1. Find out as much as you can about each of the following, and then write short notes about them — Inigo Jones, Sir Christopher Wren, Sir Gilbert Scott, Sir Charles Barry

## 2. Questions :—

- (a) What changes took place in building in the sixteenth century, and why ?
- (b) What are the chief differences between Gothic and Renaissance architecture ?
- (c) What sorts of buildings were chiefly erected (i) in the Middle Ages, (ii) in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, (iii) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ? What are the reasons for these changes ?
- (d) What are the chief characteristics of (i) nineteenth-century architecture, (ii) twentieth-century architecture ?
- (e) What do you know about the following ?—Michael Angelo, Palladio, Vanbrugh, Chambers, pilaster ; cornice, pediment

## 3 Make pictures or models of the following —

- (a) St Paul's Cathedral (the whole, or any part of it).
- (b) The Houses of Parliament
- (c) Australia House
- (d) A steel framework ready for masonry.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

**Travel.**—If we consider the difference between England to-day and England a hundred years ago, probably the first thing to strike us is the ease with which people can travel. In 1850 it was still usual for most people not to travel at all, nowadays, there are very few of us who have not been to other parts of the country. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, travel was so difficult and dangerous that most people were only too glad to do without it. To-day it is too easy and pleasant to do without. A journey which would have taken days in 1800 can be done now in half a day by train, and in two or three hours by aeroplane. Since 1919 there have been regular daily aeroplane services between London, Paris, and other great cities. In 1850 the London-Paris journey took two days or more; a modern aeroplane does it in half an hour. India, which used to be months away from Europe, can now be reached in a few days.

Even for short distances travel is vastly improved. Trams and buses and underground railways make it easier to get about in towns and cities, and there are now very few country villages from which a town cannot easily be reached by train or bus, whereas a hundred years ago many village people never saw a town in their lives.

**The Post and Telegraphs** — Besides this, there are all the improvements which enable us to communicate with



people whom we cannot visit. Early in the nineteenth century the only way to do this was by letters, which took days, or weeks, to reach distant parts of the country and which were very expensive to send long distances. In 1840 *Sir Rowland Hill* introduced the *Penny Post*. From then until 1917 the Post Office would take letters anywhere in the British Isles (and before long, anywhere in the British Empire) for a penny. Unfortunately war made it necessary to raise the price to three-halfpence in 1917, and to twopence-halfpenny in 1940.

The letter post has gained as much as anything else by the coming of the aeroplane. Air Mail has reduced from weeks to days, or even hours, the time it takes letters to reach many places abroad.

Electrical inventions have made the sending of messages quicker still. The *Morse* electric telegraph was invented in 1836. From that time telegraph wires began to spread all over Europe, and in 1865 the first cable was laid across the Atlantic to America. Ten years later, *Graham Bell* invented the telephone. Towards the end of the century, wireless telegraphy was made possible by the work of *Marconi*, and within the last few years wireless telephony has become so common that there are millions of wireless receiving sets in this country alone. In 1926 *beam wireless* stations were established, from which messages can be sent without being overheard by people for whom they are not intended, and in 1927 a regular wireless telephone service was opened across the Atlantic between London and New York.

**Health and Disease.**—All these improvements are for people's convenience. But perhaps the greatest of all inventions are those which improve people's health. *Hospitals* were not uncommon, even in the Middle Ages, but during the nineteenth century every

town in England set up its own hospital, and yet all these hospitals are kept going by the private contributions of generous people. As we all know, hospitals exist to cure illness and injuries, but they exist also to find out fresh facts about disease. Hospital doctors are constantly learning more about their work, through the experience they gain in treating so many hospital patients.

Consequently, the treatment of disease by doctors is growing more and more skilful, and disease itself is becoming less common. *Vaccination* (which was discovered by *Jenner* in 1798) has almost stamped out smallpox in this country. *Disinfectants*, which kill the germs that cause disease, are used far more freely than ever before, and *antiseptics*, which prevent those germs from becoming full-grown, do more good still. *Lord Lister* first showed how these antiseptics could be used in surgical operations, and so operations are now far less dangerous than they used to be. Moreover, *anæsthetics* (like *chloroform*, which was first used by *Dr J Y Simpson* in 1847) have made it easy to perform operations which were impossible before. The result of all this development in medicine and surgery is that the average life of an Englishman lasts much longer than it did a century ago. In quite recent times a very wonderful antiseptic, *Penicillin*, has been discovered, and successful treatments have been found for many diseases which used to be thought incurable.

**Education.**—It is not only the body which has a better chance than in 1850. We have also more opportunity of developing our minds. *Education* has improved enormously. A century ago there were few schools, and nearly all of them were kept for the private profit of the owners. Now, as we know, everybody must go to school, and most of us go there for nothing, at any rate for the first few years. Until the year 1870,

there were not nearly enough schools. In that year an Act of Parliament made it compulsory for all towns and country districts to provide as many schools as were needed, and for that reason these schools became known, after a time, as *Council Schools*.

At first people could please themselves whether or not they sent their children to school. But in 1880 *elementary education* was made compulsory, and because many parents could not pay fees, in 1891 the schools had to be made free. Since that time elementary education has been given to every child in the country. After 1918 at least a quarter of the places in the *secondary schools* were given to the best boys and girls from the elementary schools, without any fee. Then, in 1944, an Act was passed to provide free secondary education for every boy and girl in the land. At the same time, more and more *scholarships* have been provided for those who cannot go to a *university* without them, and whereas in 1800 England had only two universities, she now has twelve, apart from eight others in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and Technical Colleges all over the country. Even for those who go straight from school into business there are evening classes where they can continue their education while they are earning their living.

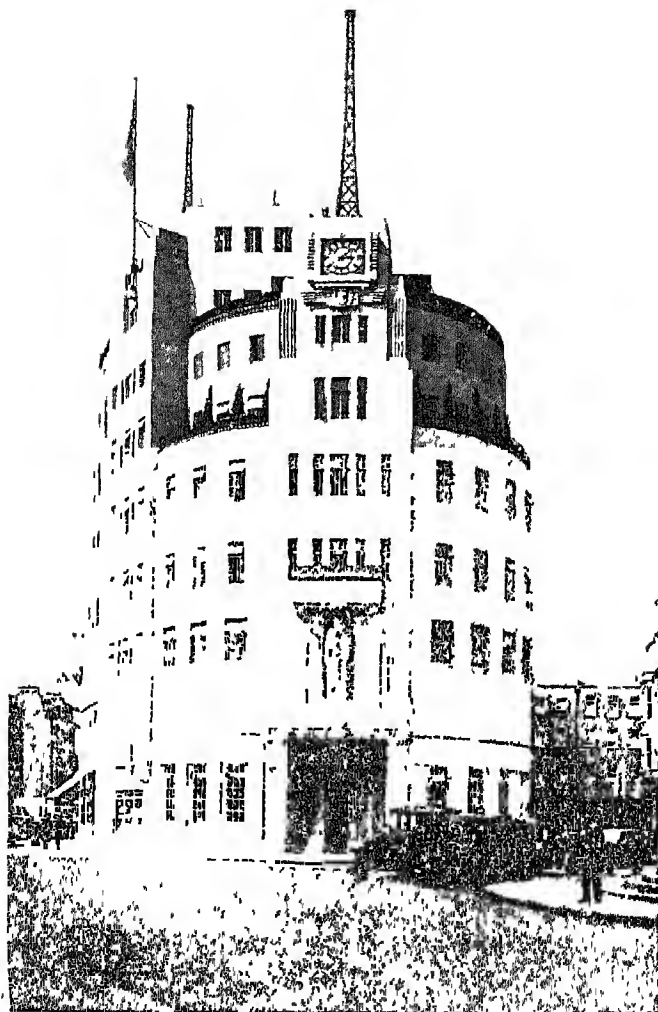
**Newspapers.**—More education has meant more books, magazines, and newspapers. *Newspapers*, especially, had a hard struggle at first. Governments did not like too much news to be published, and newspapers were restricted by a tax of fourpence a copy. In 1836 this duty was reduced to one penny, and in 1855 it was repealed altogether. From that time newspapers became more numerous and cheaper, so that everybody can now afford to buy them.

**Books, Libraries, and Art Galleries.**—Another tax which hindered reading was the *Paper Duty*, which made

all books and magazines (as well as newspapers) expensive. This tax was repealed in 1861, and since then publishers have competed to produce good books cheap. Some of the greatest books in the world can now be bought for a shilling or less. At the same time, *libraries* have spread very widely. Many ordinary shops have libraries from which books can be borrowed for a few pence a week. And, above all, almost every town and many of the villages in England have *Free Public Libraries* of their own from which the people can borrow the very best books for nothing.

The removal of the paper duty made other things cheaper as well as books. Until the nineteenth century only rich people could have pictures on their walls; the poor had to be content with such things as knitted samplers. Nowadays, good pictures are so cheap that there is no excuse for having bad ones. And just as we can get the best books for nothing from the Public Libraries, so we can see the best pictures for nothing at the public *Art Galleries*, where we can train ourselves to know what is good and what is bad in art.

**Amusements and Leisure**—Finally, we must not forget our amusements. A hundred years ago many towns had not even a theatre, and the only way to find amusement was to play games at home or outside. Even at the beginning of the twentieth century there was not a single *Picture Theatre* in the world, for it was only in 1890 that the cinematograph was invented by *Edison*. To-day there are more than 25,000 picture theatres in English-speaking countries alone. *Broadcasting*, as we know, is still more recent. The *BBC* was not founded until 1922, and yet there are now in this country millions of receiving sets and many large broadcasting stations. Before the World War of 1939-45, too, great stides had been made with *television* and television broadcasting began again when the war was over.



BROADCASTING HOUSE.  
Headquarters of the B.B.C.

Both the cinema and the wireless can do good by teaching as well as amusing us. This is not so true of some other amusements, such as football and cricket matches and entertainment fairs, all of which we enjoy for themselves, and all of which, in their present form, were introduced in the nineteenth century.

Thus perhaps the greatest difference of all between our age and former times, is that it is easy to fill our leisure hours. Until the nineteenth century working people had very little spare time, and when they had any they often used it for doing mischief. To-day, the law ensures that every man has some time for himself, and the pleasant and profitable ways of spending that time are more numerous than they have ever been before.

**Effects of the World Wars.**—But the changes of the last century have brought great evils as well as great benefits. The greatest of these evils is world war. A hundred years ago there had never been a world war. Since 1900 there have been two, and they have made vast differences to the way we live. While the wars are on, we break off our work and play and sleep to spend time in air-raid shelters. Rationing cuts short our food and clothing. Pleasure journeys to seaside and country disappear—and so do our usual football and cricket and other sports. Young men and women spend years in the Services, helping on a mighty work of destruction, instead of in their ordinary work, helping to make and do things which are really useful.

**Farming in the Twentieth Century.**—Even war, however, can cause good as well as evil. The World War of 1939-45 brought cheap hot meals in British Restaurants and schools, and free milk for growing children, and there were more privately owned restaurants than ever before. Yet we could still buy

in the shops quite enough bread and meat and other foods to live on, even if it was less than we had been used to. Where did it all come from? Very much of it still had to be imported from abroad. Ever since the Industrial Revolution Britain has been too busy producing coal and machinery and other things connected with industry to grow enough corn for its people. And so, for the last hundred and fifty years, most of our corn and flour (sometimes as much as 85 per cent) has come from other countries. But the wars prevented great amounts of shipping from reaching this country safely, and therefore the British farmers had to grow much more corn for our bread. Land which had not been tilled for many years was ploughed again. Woods were cut down to provide us with timber. And many people who had never thought of producing food for themselves now cultivated a vegetable garden, or kept poultry or bees.

**Changes on the Farm.**—Still, most of the extra food came from the farms. This result was reached in two ways—by using the land differently, and by introducing more farm machinery. Before the wars more and more farmers had found that they could not produce corn nearly as cheap as the corn imported from abroad, and so more and more of them took to cattle-farming and dairy-farming instead. Quite a number of British farmers had not a single field of corn on their land. The wars altered this. As corn and flour and bread became scarce, British farmers found that it paid them to grow corn again, and cornfields began to appear where there had been nothing but grass for generations.

Besides this, many farmers began to use much more machinery on their farms. Tractors began to take the place of horses, ploughs were drawn across the fields two or four or six at a time, potatoes were dug

up and sorted by machinery instead of by hand, cream was separated from the milk by mechanical separators—and even the milking was done by machinery on the bigger farms. Many British farmers introduced from America the *Combine Harvester*—a machine which cuts and threshes the new corn all at once, and so does away with the need to spend time in making corn-stacks. More chemical manures were used on the farms—and there were more chemists interested in farming, and more young farmers being trained in colleges to keep really up to date with their farming methods.

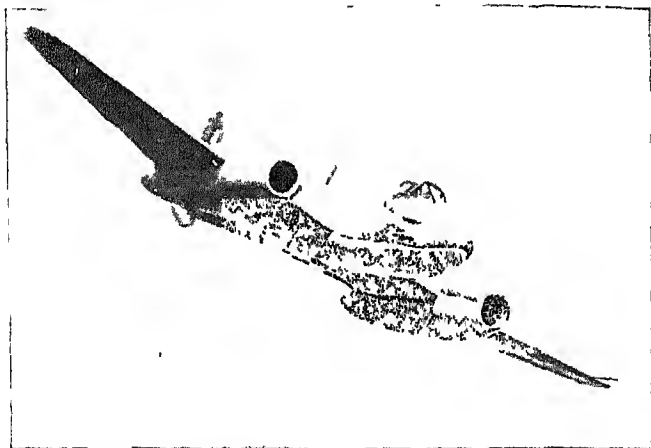


Photo: Burrall's Photo Press, Ltd

#### METEOR JET PLANE

**Speed.**—War brought other great changes which may make vast differences to the lives of people in the future. Aeroplanes of the R.A.F. became faster and faster—especially after the introduction of *jet propulsion*. During the war of 1939-45 the speed of aeroplanes was at least doubled—to over 600 miles



an hour Yet the invention of *radiolocation* made flying much safer than ever before After the wars the new inventions were used in civil flying as well, so that people who can afford to travel by plane find their journeys far quicker than they were a few years ago

Jet propulsion is perhaps the most important discovery made for many thousands of years. Ever since prehistoric times, man's best way of moving things has been by the use of wheels, and many think that the wheel and fire are the two most important discoveries man has ever made Jet propulsion promises to change all this—how much, we shall not be able to tell for a long time yet.

**Atomic Energy.**—Another (and even greater) power was at last discovered at the very end of the 1939-45 war Late in the nineteenth century scientists realised that the atoms of which all things consist contain an enormous force, and for many years they tried to release this force and harness it to useful purposes In 1945 they succeeded The first important result was the atomic bomb But atomic energy can be used for better purposes than destroying cities, and it is far stronger than steam or electricity or any other power which man has used till now

**Paying for War.**—To pay for the two great wars the British people have had to be taxed far more severely than ever before The richer you are, the more in proportion you have to pay—and the very rich have to pay so much that many of them are very rich no longer In fact, the wars have quite altered the lives of the different classes in Britain Not only are there now hardly any very rich, there are no longer any so poor that they do not know where the next meal is coming from, as there are still in most countries

**Nationalisation.**—During the wars far more things had to come under the control of the Government—not only food and clothes rationing but the distribution of almost everything from coal and steel to paper and books. At the end of the war in 1945 the British people elected a Labour Government, which believed in *Nationalisation*—that is, having all the chief industries not only controlled but owned by the Government, as the Post Office has always been. This Government at once set about nationalising the railways, the mines, electricity, transport, and other important industries, so that in future the profits should go not to private owners but to the country as a whole.

**Traffic on the Roads.**—Other things besides industry are being more and more organised. Even before the world wars many things were getting out of control because they were not properly planned. One of these was road traffic. Cars and lorries and buses had become far too numerous for the old English roads, and motor transport brought injury and death, as well as convenience, to civilised countries. There was inconvenience too. Slow-moving and fast-moving vehicles are always getting into one another's way and causing waste of time. So the road system of the country is to be replanned. Already arterial roads and by-passes, traffic-lanes, and new kinds of road junctions are making a big difference—not to mention such things as pedestrian crossings and traffic lights to deal with the congested streets of our towns.

**Town and Country Planning.**—In fact, the towns themselves need complete replanning. Most of them grew up unplanned during the Industrial Revolution, and they are quite inconvenient. Houses and factories and shops are mixed together almost anyhow. Many a residential district has been spoilt by factories built

in the neighbourhood. Many a shopping quarter has grown up too far from the houses where the customers live. Houses have been allowed to be crowded too close together, with too few parks and open spaces and playing-fields to keep the people healthy.

Schemes have been prepared to alter all this. In future, towns and cities will not be allowed to become (like London and other great cities) so big that their people have to spend too much time in getting to and from their work, or getting into the country for fresh air. Towns are to be surrounded by *Green Belts*, where there will be no buildings except those of the farms, and the towns and cities themselves are to be planned in districts so that works and shops and houses do not interfere with one another.

**Social Security.**—There are further plans to improve the lives of everybody—plans for better insurance against unemployment and sickness and old age. Till now, even the best national insurance schemes have left many people afraid of the time when they can earn no more. New plans for *Social Security* (as it is called) will try to guarantee so much trade that wages will be good and unemployment almost unknown, and that those who are handicapped by age or sickness or injury will be looked after properly.

#### EXERCISES ON CHAPTER XXVIII

- 1 Make a time chart to illustrate the improvements mentioned in this chapter, giving a separate column to each different kind of progress.

#### 2 Questions.—

- (a) Write an account of the progress which has been made since 1800 in the following —(i) Travel (see also Chapter XIX), (ii) other means of communication, (iii) Public Health (see also Chapter XXIV), (iv) Education, (v) Reading, (vi) Amusements; (vii) Farming, (viii) Town and Country Planning, (ix) Social Security.

- (b) What is meant by the saying that every year the world gets smaller? In what ways is this saying true?
- (c) What do you know of the history of newspapers in the nineteenth century?
- (d) What do you know about the following?—Sir Rowland Hill, Morse; Graham Bell, Edison, Marconi, Jenner, Lister, J. Y. Simpson, Council Schools; Newspaper Duty, Paper Duty, Pencilin, Television, Combine Harvester, Radiolocation, Atomic Energy, Nationalisation, Green Belts, Social Security

### 3 Source Exercise —

"I was then sent to a boys' school, to learn to 'write and cypher,' thought at that time to be all the education required for poor people. It was the only school in the town at that time, and I had two masters while there. The first master was a severe one, and the second was somewhat worse. Cautises [flat sticks] on the palm of the hand, and very severe canings, were punishments for not recollecting our tasks, and on one occasion I saw him hang up a boy by the two thumbs, with his toes just touching the ground, for playing truant. Here, too, I caught the smallpox from seeing a little girl brought into the school in her grandmother's arms. But bad as I had it, I was not marked with it as numbers of my school-fellows were, for so terrible were its ravages at that period that I can vividly remember the number of seamed and scarred faces among them. Vaccination at that time had not been introduced into our town, though inoculation for the smallpox was occasionally resorted to, but it was looked upon as sinful, and a doubting of Providence, although about that period one in every fourteen persons born died of its ravages." (*The Life and Struggles of William Lovell*, pp. 4-5)

- (a) When do you suppose this was written, and to what time does it refer?
- (b) What differences are there between what was taught at this school and what you are taught at school now?
- (c) Write an account of a day at this school as though you were one of the pupils.
- (d) What do you know about vaccination?
- (e) What reason (according to this passage) did people give for not being vaccinated? What other reasons did they probably give?

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